

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR AND FISCAL TOWN BOARD MEETING OF THE TOWN OF THURMAN HELD JULY 21, 2009 AT THE TOWN HALL, 311 ATHOL ROAD, ATHOL NEW YORK, FISCAL MEETING COMMENCING AT 6:30 P.M. AND REGULAR MEETING COMMENCING AT 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: MR. LEON GALUSHA

MR. LAWRENCE PITKIN

MR. CHARLES BILLS

ABSENT: MR. JAMES LIGON

Recording Secretary: **Cynthia R. Hyde**, Town Clerk

The meeting was called to order by **Mr. Lawrence Pitkin, Supervisor**

FISCAL MEETING:

ABSTRACT OF CLAIMS: The Town Board reviewed all claims on abstract # 29 general fund and abstract #64 highway fund.

REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING:

Pledge of allegiance to the flag of the **United States of America**

Roll call of Town Board Members by the Town Clerk

A moment of silence for our troops.

APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 16, 2009 MINUTES:

On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the minutes were approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN

INTERVIEW AND APPOINTMENT OF A NEW BOARD MEMBER:

Candidates for the Town Board seat were **Glenda Duell, Robert Shepler, Albert Vasak** and **Irv West**. **Supervisor Pitkin** asked each candidate to read their letter of interest.

INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the Town Board went into executive session at 7:15 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN

OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the Town Board came out of executive session at 7:22 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN

APPOINTMENT OF NEW BOARD MEMBER: **Albert Vasak** of Hall Mountain Road, Town of Thurman was appointed Town Councilman to fill the unexpired seat on the Town of Thurman Town Board previously held by **Ruth Keller**. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the Town Board appointed **Mr. Albert Vasak** as **Town Councilman** for the remainder of the year 2009.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 AYES ~, BILLS, GALUSHA, PITKIN

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS: On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** payment of claims from abstract #29 General Fund [\$19,141.35], and #64 Highway fund [\$15,276.32] was approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 AYES ~, BILLS, GALUSHA, PITKIN

1 ABSTAIN ~ VASAK

PUBLIC HEARING: The public hearing for **Daniel L. Stiles** regarding a proposed 2 lot subdivision on the east and west sides of River Road in the Town of Thurman was called to order at 7:27 P.M..

The following persons asked questions about the proposed subdivision.

Susan Shepler

Robert Florence

On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Al Vasak** the Town Board approved the subdivision proposed by **Daniel Stiles**.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, the hearing was terminated at 8:35 P.M...

RESUME REGULAR MEETING: The regular meeting of the Town of Thurman Town Board resumed at 8:36 P.M...

REPORT FROM COUNCILMAN LIGON: Supervisor Pitkin gave Councilman Ligon's report. **YOUTH COMMISSION:** The summer youth program is under way with **24** kids attending. Activities include crafts and field trips along with an upcoming car wash to raise funds. The **Thurman Occupancy Tax Committee** met on July 10, 2009. **HIGHWAY:** A special board meeting was held on July 10, 2009 to approve the purchase of a new truck for the highway department. The truck is a heavy duty international tandem with a 17 yard bed and one man plowing controls. The town got a good deal on this truck. The truck which is already on the lot costs \$174,000.00. Stony Creek bought a similar truck last year and spent \$30,000.00 more on it. **Supervisor Pitkin** said that two concerns residents seem to have are town

highways and garbage. **Pitkin** felt that it was tough to have to spend money on a new truck but that there was a need.

The board felt it would be unwise to wait on buying a truck. Their reasoning was that with winter on the way the highway crew needs fit work trucks. If a breakdown were to occur in the winter it would mean having to replace a truck on the spot and be at the mercy of the going price. Big work trucks also often have to be ordered and then made, which can take time. The board members agreed that they could not justify putting more money into the old truck or risk being short a work truck in the winter.

APPOINT A TOWN OF THURMAN CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT:

Reading of letters of interest by Evey Wood and Susan Shepler.

INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the **Town Board** entered executive session at 7:43 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by **Charles Bills**, seconded by **Leon Galusha** the **Town Board** exited executive session at 7:49 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Al Vasak**, **Evelyn Wood** was appointed **Cemetery Superintendent** for the Town of Thurman.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: **Supervisor Pitkin** said that county layoffs have happened and more cuts are looming. **Pitkin** said that the good news is Medicaid is going to cost the county less this year.

DSL: Supervisor Pitkin had good news regarding high speed internet. Justin Parker [who works for Verizon] has spearheaded an effort to bring DSL to Thurman. **Parker** has convinced Verizon to install hardware in Athol which could be done as early as the end of summer. If this first phase works out and there is enough interest the next place Verizon would install hardware would be Parker Cross Road. At each point anyone within a three mile radius would be able get DSL.

RESOLUTION #70: A Resolution to authorize General Fund budget adjustments, on a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills** the budget adjustments were approved.

3 AYES ~, BILLS, GALUSHA, PITKIN/ 1 ABSTAIN ~ VASAK

RESOLUTION #71: A Resolution to authorize Highway Fund budget adjustments, on a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Al Vasak** the budget adjustments were approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

RESOLUTION #72: A Resolution to authorize the Town Justice to apply for a grant from the Office of Court Administration. On a motion by **Charles Bills**, seconded by **Leon Galusha** the Town Justice was given permission to apply for a grant.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

RESOLUTION #73: A Resolution to authorize the new town policies. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills**

3 AYES ~, BILLS, GALUSHA, PITKIN

1 ABSTAIN ~ VASAK

RESOLUTION #74: A Resolution to authorize bids for the sale of a 1995 Ford C-9000 dump truck. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills**

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

RESOLUTION #75: A resolution to set the standard workday for elected and appointed officials. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills**

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

RESOLUTION #76: A Resolution to authorize Occupancy tax expenditures. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills**

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

RESOLUTION #77: A Resolution to authorize an amendment to an Occupancy tax expenditure. On a motion by **Leon Galusha**, seconded by **Charles Bills**

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

OPENING OF BIDS: Roofing bids were opened. Bids submitted were from **Murphy Construction, Witz Roofing** and **Three Brothers Roofing**. **Supervisor Pitkin** said that he had homework to do checking references, insurances and making sure that these roofing companies comply with prevailing wage.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: **Becky Desourdy** said the town spent \$1,700.65 plus another \$725.00 for attorney fees and wanted to know why. **Supervisor Pitkin** said that it had to do with a grievance procedure, and that he would need to check the records to answer that

question. **Becky Desourdy** then asked if the union contract is closed until 2010 why was the town spending this money. **Supervisor Pitkin** replied that he was not sure he should discuss the grievance in public. **Robert Anthione** added that it was unwise to discuss these matters in the absence of counsel. **Supervisor Pitkin** agreed that personnel issues shouldn't be discussed in a public forum. **Becky Desourdy** stated that she heard a rumor that **Supervisor Pitkin** said none of the town employees paid taxes. **Desourdy** wanted to know which taxes **Pitkin** meant. **Desourdy** asked "*what taxes are you talking about is it state, federal, land tax, food tax what is it.*" **Supervisor Pitkin** replied that he had not made that statement, that it was false and that he didn't know where it came from. **Supervisor Pitkin** added that rumors were difficult and that many rumors have been spread around town. He appreciated **Becky** asking for the facts and thanked her.

Robert Anthione suggested putting the Truck [that the town is selling] on eBay. **Rick Kenyon** wanted to know where the minimum bid came from. **Supervisor Pitkin** said that he took advice from **Highway Superintendent Pat Wood** to determine what the minimum bid should be. **Councilman Bills** added that the truck had been rebuilt once already.

Discussion turned again to work to be done on the town hall. **Loren Eddy** said that a non union contractor doesn't have to pay the prevailing wage. **Councilman Galusha** replied that prevailing wage has to be paid for any work done on a municipality. **Supervisor Pitkin** stated that the roof needs to be dealt with quickly. **Pitkin** also said that some of the work needed on the town hall could be done in house under workman's compensation. **Glenda Duell** asked what was going to

be done to the town hall building. **Supervisor Pitkin** explained proposed plans. **Joyce Eddy** thought that using the old alter [stored in the Harris House] in the new court room area would mix church and state. Discussion went on reiterating plans for the town hall and reasons for not using the Harris house.

The topic of the next round of discussion was the new town policy for town employees. There seemed to be confusion as to why a policy had been written. **Joyce Eddy** felt that the policy contained general standards of conduct that needn't be written down. **Eddy** wanted to know what was going on that prompted the board to write a policy. **Supervisor Pitkin** replied that the policy wasn't an answer to something that happened; it was an effort to conform to normal business practices. In other words, in the business world it is common policy to have a policy. **Supervisor Pitkin** reassured members of the highway crew [that were in attendance] that the highway contract superseded the town policy. **Robert Anthione** described a policy as a way to have clarity.

Jim Mosher changed the subject and asked how the board planned on paying for the new International truck. **Supervisor Pitkin** said it may be paid for with excess [fund balance] money but before making a decision the board was going to look at this year's revenue to see what that might cover. **Jim Mosher** wanted to know if the town really needed a new truck. **Glenda Duell** offered up the idea that a used truck might be found. **Duell** said that large municipalities sell used trucks at a good prices. **Supervisor Pitkin** said that **Highway Superintendent Pat Wood** felt that when a used truck is purchased someone else's headaches

were part of the bargain. **Rick Kenyon** added that other town's trucks are used hard and are not worth it.

LETTERS: The Town Clerk read a cemetery report from **Robyn Croissant**, a letter from **Joan Harris, [S.A.F.E]** requesting the use of the recreation field for a **S.A.F.E.** club event, and a letter from **Cathy** and **Joe Munnuci** commending the excellent job done by former **Councilwoman Ruth Keller.**

The letter from the **S.A.F.E.** club sparked a debate concerning ATV use in the Town of Thurman. Many were concerned that special events hosted by **S.A.F.E.** would encourage an influx of outside ATV riders at the risk of town landowners. Others were concerned that the **S.A.F.E.** club [a respectable local club] was being penalized for abusive ATV use that had nothing to do with club members. The board will revisit the **S.A.F.E.** clubs request next month.

Lastly, there was concern that the Reynolds Cemetery needed attention. **Supervisor Pitkin** said the town would address that problem.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business on a motion by **Councilman Galusha** seconded by **Councilman Bills** the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m...

MOTION CARRIED: 4 AYES ~GALUSHA, BILLS, PITKIN, VASAK

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Hyde, Town Clerk

August 2009

