

**Town Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Morristown
January 16, 2024**

Present: Supervisor, Frank Putman; Councilman, Chris Coffin; Councilman, David VanArnam; Councilman, Gary Turner; and Councilman, Shawn Macaulay.

Others Present: Dean Hoffman, Highway Superintendent; Gregg Mallette, Code Enforcement Officer; Jill Sullivan, Town Clerk; community members.

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Putman at 6:07 pm.

Pledge: The pledge was said at the beginning of the Organizational meeting just prior to this meeting.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Councilman Coffin to approve the December 12, 2023, regular Town Board meeting minutes and December 28, 2023, special board meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman VanArnam.

Vote: Councilman VanArnam – Aye, Councilman Turner – Aye, Councilman Coffin – Aye, Councilman Macaulay – Aye, Supervisor Putman – Aye. Motion carried 5 Ayes.

Correspondence: The Town received a letter from FEMA and New York State Homeland Security stating that the dock project with project ID 089-48571-00 has been approved and will close PW 135, as written. The total amount accounted for is \$135,823.57. We may get a request in 2024 for a quarterly report and have been instructed to just put on the report “Project Closed Out”.

An invitation for the Morristown Fire Department banquet was extending to the Town Council and employees.

Public Comment: Katherine Lynch was on zoom and she submitted a letter regarding the sewer lines at her property at 13 Lina Street. She explained how the pipes were installed and put together. The Town work crew dug up the lines to see if they could find the pipes. There is a sewer pot that has never been functional. Kathrine is asking the Town to remove the non-functional sewer pot because she may build a garage in that location. There was discussion and further explanation. Supervisor Putman asked Dean if it would be possible to remove it. Dean stated it is possible and that it would have to be a Spring project.

MOTION

Councilman VanArnam made a motion to remove the non-functional sewer pot at 13 Lina Street in the Spring. Supervisor Putman seconded the motion.

**Town Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Morristown
January 16, 2024**

Vote: Councilman VanArnam – Aye, Councilman Turner – Aye, Councilman Coffin – Aye, Councilman Macaulay – Aye, Supervisor Putman – Aye. Motion carried 5 Ayes.

St. Lawrence Agency Presentation: Wayne and Lana Story presented the 2024 insurance proposal. They reviewed the policy, cost, and coverage. The building limit has been lowered due to the loss. The builders risk insurance can be cancelled once the barn has been built and is completed but the town must let them know so they can cancel it. Once the barn is completed the insured amount will increase but it is currently insured for \$100,000.00. The entire policy was reviewed for accuracy.

One find was that the 2006 truck should be removed. Lana said to pay the bill as it is and when it is removed, and adjustment have been made the town will be credited.

Old Business:

- 1. Financial Report:** Councilman Coffin reported that the interest income for 2023 was \$62,000. It is time for the CD's to be renewed. They can be renewed for 12 months at 4 ¾ % for the entire 12 months or we can renew them for six months at 5% and see what the interest rates are after six months. All council members agreed to lock the CD's in for 4 ¾ % for a 12-month commitment.

The existing CD's will produce approximately \$70,000 interest income.

Councilman Coffin is proposing adding more money into the CD's. The money can be taken out at any time with no penalty.

Councilman Coffin is also proposing a policy on financial reserves to cover a recession if sales tax decreases. The fire is a prime example for reserve funds. He gave examples of why a policy should be in place. He will work on it and bring it to the council when is completed.

- 2. DANC Monthly report:** The December report was distributed and reviewed.
- 3. Surplus Property Update:** Maps of the property behind Bay Street were distributed. The property will need to be surveyed because there are many glitches, and the sewer plant will need to be marked out. Bay Street is not on the map. The 25' right of way adjoins Rt 12 which could be made larger to have access to multiple parcels. The question is – does the Town want to sell as one parcel or multiple parcels. Supervisor Putman asked the Councilmen to consider, review, and make comments regarding the property.

**Town Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Morristown
January 16, 2024**

- 4. Lease/Service Agreement for Dog Pound/shelter:** There needs to be some clarification of the agreement for services and costs. Supervisor Putman will contact Dan Moyer to get clarification. This item was tabled until the information becomes available.

New Business:

- 1. Streetlights:** There has been concern about the lack of lighting on the corner of Morris and Main and the town has been asked if more lights can be installed. Councilman Macaulay suggested including lights around the corner by the town barns and on Bay Street.
- 2. St. Lawrence County Hold Harmless Resolution #1-2024:** This resolution is the same as in the past it holds the county harmless within shared services.

MOTION

Councilman Coffin made a motion to approve Resolution #1-2024 for Holding Harmless St. Lawrence County and to submit it with the insurance certificate. Councilman VanArnam seconded the motion.

Vote: Councilman VanArnam – Aye, Councilman Turner – Aye, Councilman Coffin – Aye, Councilman Macaulay – Aye, Supervisor Putman – Aye. Motion carried 5 Ayes.

Department Reports:

Town Clerk: Jill Sullivan stated that the Civic Ready residential alert system is getting closer to launching. We are in the final stages of setting it up and sending test alerts. When the time comes, information will be on the website on how to sign up to receive the alerts.

Highway Department: Dean Hoffman stated they have done some plowing, and all the trucks and equipment are working well. Wayne Moquin will be out on medical leave for approximately another month. The Town barn is coming along, all the beams and two walls are up.

Dean stated he has an issue with an individual being hired to do some work at the office for \$25.00 per hour when he has a part-time employee only making \$21.00 per hour and is on-call and comes in anytime he is asked, or he'll just come in when he knows we are shorthanded. He goes above and beyond and has been an employee for a few years. He would like his hourly wage increased.

There was discussion about whether it is necessary for us to have two loaders. Dean is recommending that we wait until Spring and sell both loaders and purchase one with warranty.

**Town Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Morristown
January 16, 2024**

MOTION

Councilman Macaulay made a motion to increase the Highway Department part-time employee hourly rate to \$25.00 per hour. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Vote: Councilman VanArnam – Aye, Councilman Turner – Aye, Councilman Coffin – Aye, Councilman Macaulay – Aye, Supervisor Putman – Aye. Motion carried 5 Ayes.

Dean has been asked by a resident on how to go about adding new water and sewer hookups, do they come to us, or do we bring it to them? There was a discussion, and it was suggested that, for new construction, the Town run the lines to the tap at the curb stop and limit the footage. It was stated that this needs to be put into policy. We can draft a policy and have Andy provide the necessary legal language.

Dean

Code Enforcement: Gregg Mallette stated that highway guys did a great job on the floor in the Code Enforcement office.

This has been a good year for the Codes department for 155 permits, 37 Zoning and Planning cases and 28 units for fire inspections. There have been 36 violations issued. The short-term rental ordinance will be a challenge for the incoming Code Officer in 2024.

Gregg is retiring in May – it is a Civil Service position and there is one person on that list to canvas. We will post the position. We can hire provisional and request a test for January 2025 if needed. Well ask for applications to be submitted February 2nd, which is in three weeks and interviews will be done sometime after that with the full board. There will be a month overlap with anticipation to hire for April.

Historian: A written report was distributed.

Other Business:

Resolution #2-2024 – Polling hours for proposed Water District #2 vote: This resolution is to establish the polling hours and site for the voter approval of the proposed Town of Morristown Water District #2.

MOTION

Councilman Coffin made a motion to hold the Proposed Water District #2 vote at 402 Gouverneur Street during the hours of 1:00 pm - 7:00 pm on February 6, 2024. Councilman Macaulay seconded the motion.

**Town Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Morristown
January 16, 2024**

Vote: Councilman VanArnam – Aye, Councilman Turner – Aye, Councilman Coffin – Aye, Councilman Macaulay – Aye, Supervisor Putman – Aye. Motion carried 5 Ayes.

Town Justice: Supervisor Putman stated he received a letter from our Town Justice, Jim Phillips, informing the board that the records are ready for the annual internal audit of records and docket audit to be performed. Supervisor Putman and Councilman Coffin have done the audits in the past and will do so for 2024.

Judy Wight retiring: Judy Wright informed the Board that she will be retiring and moving to Florida. She does not have a specific date yet. She will work on the position specification for her job to be advertised. She states she will be interested and available for consulting, from a distance, if the board needs her to, and is willing to pay for the consulting.

Windmill Study Grant update: We have been notified that Morristown has been awarded \$10,000 for the Study of the Windmill. Additional funds will be needed, so we will continue to research for additional grant opportunities.

Morristown Library: Dean stated that he was notified that the library had been broken into. The only thing that is missing is a SIMS card out of a phone. Bridget is looking into cameras and more secure locks. The board was unaware of anything happening at the library and would like additional information with more details.

George Cosler: George Cosler mentioned that the panel box at Bay Side Park is not locked and there is no light on the pole. He also wanted to mention that Gouverneur has a new sign at the Town Barn with information on it. He thinks it would be nice to see something like that here in Morristown. George spoke about a bus wash and knows that it gives an additional 10 years to a vehicle and that the town could possibly research something like that for the town and fire departments to wash the trucks. Dean stated that the fire department does have a spray wash that they drive the fire trucks and ambulances over to wash the under carriage, which does work. It was made by one of the members while he was in BOCES.

Resident Concern: Supervisor Putman received a letter from Joanne Vaillancourt stating that her neighbor has posted a Private Property sign up and the property doesn't belong to him. It was suggested by the council that Supervisor Putman investigate the concern and send a letter ordering that the sign be removed if it is not on his private property.

Executive Session: At 7:52 pm Councilman Macaulay made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and go into executive session for personnel reasons. Councilman VanArnam seconded the motion. The executive session ended at 8:20 pm with no action taken.