

**Town Board Meeting Minutes  
Town of Morristown  
March 14, 2023**

**Present:** Chris Coffin, Gary Turner, David VanArnam, Shawn Macaulay.

**Excused:** Frank Putman.

**Others Present:** Dean Hoffman, Highway Superintendent; Gregg Mallette, Code Enforcement Officer; Jill Sullivan, Town Clerk; Joe Lightfoot, County Legislator; Matt Cooper, Barton & Loguidice; Community members (list attached).

**Called to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Deputy Supervisor, Chris Coffin at 6:02 pm.

**Pledge:** The pledge was led by Shawn Macaulay and said by all.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Councilman Macauley to approve the February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Town Board meeting minutes and as written and presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman VanArnam.

**Vote:** David VanArnam – Aye, Gary Turner – Aye, Chris Coffin – Aye, Shawn Macaulay – Aye. Motion carried 4 Ayes.

**Correspondence:** There was no correspondence.

**Public Comment:**

**Joe Lightfoot, County Legislator:** Joe Lightfoot stated that the County is seeing fluctuation within the budget as unforeseen circumstances arise. This is happening mostly in the Department of Social Services for childcare and foster care. The budget was also adjusted to remodel the County Clerk's office for accommodation purposes.

The county is looking at areas with no wifi and trying to find a way to connect residence who want it. Dave Stout asked about Verizon receiving the grants to hook up internet services to some of these areas. They did a very limited area in Brier Hill. On one road, they offered and set polls to Amish residence to be hooked up but were not able to hook up other residence throughout the rest of the road. Joe stated he did not know what Verizon was able to do with the grant.

The County is waiting to hear back from the Fire/Rescue Departments and Towns to see what the census is for the property tax exemption.

Joe stated at the last meeting he indicated Massena and Gouverneur want to sign on to dispatching. He has since been informed that Gouverneur does not want to sign on for dispatching.

**Old Business:**

- 1. Supervisor's Update:** Deputy Supervisor, Chris Coffin presented a report on the Town Highway barn. We know we have to re-build and buy a couple of new trucks. The start was that four Councilman toured a couple Town buildings throughout the

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County, Lisbon was just the Highway Department, and the cost was 2.1 million for just the garage, and with the salt barn included the total was 3.2 million. The Town of Hammond was just the Town offices, and that building was 1.4 million. We are considering consolidating so we can use the figure of 3.5 million but before we have an actual cost we need a plan. We have at least 1 million being recovered by fire insurance for replacement may be closer to 2 million. We have 1 million in reserve funds, and we could obtain a 1-million-dollar loan from USDA for 28 years. The payment per year would be \$54,000 or \$115,000.00 annually for 2 million. We may be able to cover this with the funds we have set aside \$380,000 per year. DANC reserve is \$125,000 and we have been lucky to receive additional sales tax revenue from the county. Deputy Supervisor Coffin asked for the council to think this over and we can meet in two weeks for a special meeting, prior to our regular April board meeting.

Councilman VanArnam stated we need to hire an architect to get the preliminary information before we proceed. Deputy Supervisor Coffin will speak to Aaron Jarvis, Tisdell Associates and Will Hentschel. Matt Cooper, Barton & Loguidice offered to provide information as well. All these firms have worked with USDA. Deputy Supervisor, Coffin would like to visit the Parishville Fire Station to get further information on a USDA funded building.

2. **Financial Report:** Deputy Supervisor Coffin stated that there is no financial report available. The bank balance has not yet been reconciled due to a glitch with the new software.
3. **DANC Monthly report** – We have not received this month’s report from DANC yet.
4. **Black Lake Project Funds** – Deputy Supervisor Coffin stated that Supervisor Putman sent a letter to the Black Lake Association, asking if they could find out if DEC will accept the data collected by the association. We would like to know that before we spend the funds on the project. He has not received any feedback.
5. **Building Ordinance Update** - St. Lawrence County Planning Board reviewed our revised copy of the Town Ordinance. They are suggesting including a Solar Law with a limit on prime land. For Air B & B’ the suggestion is to contact the owner first to find out the intentions and go from there. We have several old rentals here in Morristown that have special use permits which allow the town to set regulations. Gregg stated he will make the revisions and provide a new draft.

**Discussion:** Pam Sovie stated she does not want Air B&B’s in Residential and has had conversation about investors coming into the area. She would like to see it not allowed. Sean Jenkins stated years ago, businesses on the river were not allowed. Pam asked if a Moratorium could be granted on any new applications until this is settled through the ordinance? She asked if she could be given a copy of the draft ordinance once it is ready. Gregg stated yes copies will be available.

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**MOTION**

**Councilman VanArnam made a motion to place a moratorium on any new applications for Air B&B's and short-term rentals but not to affect any already in motion. Councilman Macaulay seconded the motion.**

**Vote: David VanArnam – Aye, Gary Turner – Aye, Chris Coffin – Aye, Shawn Macaulay – Aye. Motion carried 4 Ayes.**

**New Business:**

- 1. CST Group Firewall Protection Proposal and conference room equipment:** CST Group has provided us with a proposal for firewall protection and the conference room equipment. The amount proposed for the firewall protection is \$1,482.96 and the conference room equipment proposal is \$668.99.

It was suggested to add an additional mic. Jill will inform CST group to include a second mic in the proposal to bring it back to the Council.

**MOTION**

**Councilman VanArnam made a motion to accept the firewall protection proposal from CST Group. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

**Vote: David VanArnam – Aye, Gary Turner – Aye, Chris Coffin – Aye, Shawn Macaulay – Aye. Motion carried 4 Ayes.**

- 2. Resolution #5 -2023 St. Lawrence County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** This plan has been updated and approved by the County. They are asking for the Town of Morristown for a resolution accepting it,

**MOTION**

**Councilman VanArnam made a motion to approve the resolution #5-2023 for St. Lawrence County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

**Vote: David VanArnam – Aye, Gary Turner – Aye, Chris Coffin – Aye, Shawn Macaulay -Aye. Motion carried 4 – Ayes.**

- 3. Amendment #2 to the Water Improvement Project Agreement with Barton & Loguidice:** The amendment is the increase cost of \$14,500 for additional grant seeking, and to revise/adjust the engineering report as a result of learning that the State Park will need additional EDU's. On an hourly basis the cost is capped at \$15,000.

**MOTION**

**Councilman Macaulay made a motion to approve Amendment #2 to the Water Improvement Project Agreement with Barton & Loguidice. Councilman VanArnam seconded the motion.**

**Vote: David VanArnam – Aye, Gary Turner – Aye, Chris Coffin – Aye, Shawn Macaulay -Aye. Motion carried 4 – Ayes.**

4. **Sidewalk Maintenance:** There have been complaints of the sidewalks not being maintained. This was done within the Village but as it was dissolved it was made into law that the Town would only maintain the sidewalks on Main Street and in front of the school. Homeowners are not fined for not maintaining the sidewalks at their residence. The Council supports the current law.
5. **Interested Engineering Firms for the Black Lake Sewer Study:** Barton & Loguidice was the only firm to submit a bid and interest to complete the Black Lake Sewer Study. Matt Copper explained their proposal and the process of completing the study. The Town has been awarded a \$50,000 grant for the study with a local share of \$10,000.

**MOTION**

**Councilman VanArnam made a motion to accept the bid proposal from Barton & Loguidice for the Black Lake Sewer Study. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

**Department Reports:**

**Town Clerk:** Jill Sullivan stated that she has renewed the 2023 Tax Warrant for tax collection.

**Highway Department:** Dean Hoffman stated that the insurance company has approved \$68,000 for the temporary shelter. The check will be coming any day. Everything has been completed and sent to the insurance company for the fire, we are just waiting for the final numbers.

**Code Enforcement:** Gregg Mallette stated there are some projects moving through the Planning & Zoning Boards. An Affidavit has been signed with the attorney to move forward with the property violations. It looks like there will be four more houses this spring.

**Town Historian:** Shawn Macaulay stated that the Historian is doing a great job with the position and maintaining facebook.

**Other Business:** There will be an audit done on the Justice books prior to the next board meeting.

There will be another round of water surveys sent out and will include the seasonal residence. This should change the coast as well as the numbers.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned upon motion by Councilman VanArman and seconded by Councilman VanArnam at 7:55 pm.