

June 3, 2013

A regularly scheduled work session of the Lockport Town Board was conducted at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, June 3, 2013, at the Town Hall, 6560 Dysinger Road, Lockport, New York.

Present were: Supervisor: Marc R. Smith

Town Council members: Cheryl A. Antkowiak  
Paul W. Siejak  
Mark C. Crocker  
Patricia Dufour

Also present: Nancy A. Brooks, Town Clerk, Michael J. Norris, Town Attorney, Robert Klavoon of Audubon Engineering and Jill Lederhouse, Town Assessor. Supervisor Smith welcomed everyone and opened the meeting for the following discussion and/or action:

**1. Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk announced that there will be some prospective volunteer firemen to vote on at the Wednesday, June 5, 2013 Town Board meeting.

Correspondence:

- 1) The Town Clerk received a written resignation letter from Alice Lane in the Building & Assessing Dept. as she retired effective May 30, 2013.
- 2) The Dept. of State sent notice of new legislation requiring Town Boards to appoint an officer to accept filings of Notice of Claims sent from the Dept. of State. This will be placed on the Agenda for the June 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**2. Town Attorney**

**Demolition on Tonawanda Creek Road** - Mr. Norris stated that he is working with the bank to acquire all the necessary information to proceed with the future demolition of a house on Tonawanda Creek Road. He will keep the Town Board advised as the status progresses.

**3. Engineer**

Mr. Klavoon gave a very brief update of the various projects that will soon begin including: the security improvement project for Town Hall and the Annex; the façade improvements on the Carpenter's building; the new HVAC system for the Highway Department; the trail improvements at the John Austin Nature Trail Park; as well as the sanitary sewer televising & flushing project in Carlisle Gardens and Lincoln Village. He stated that there will be a lot of activity in all of these projects in the upcoming weeks and that he will provide updates as they proceed.

**Reger Drive Sewer Lift Station**

Supervisor Smith reported that there was a major issue when the pump at this station was clogged and caused quite an amount of double overtime (crews called in at holiday rate) for Town crews to go out and clean up the problem. He advised the Town Board that it might be advisable to add a "chopper" to the pump in this lift station to help prevent further issues which seem to be chronic with this particular station. Between the materials costs and the labor costs, it is his recommendation to have the engineer help seek information on placing the chopping unit at that location.

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#### 4. **Town Board Comments/Reports**

*Councilwoman Antkowiak* – reported that she is looking into getting a refrigerator for the Recreation Committee room at Day Road Park. She also urged Town Board members to go to the park to see the recently finished facility. She commented that the Town Highway Dept. did a fantastic job in constructing the much needed addition.

She also reported receiving a request from the Lockport City School District to hold a special needs children's event at the Day Road Park. The event would be for only two hours and she is not anticipating any issues by having the event held at the park.

She will also be seeking to have a "Parks Events" Calendar developed to advise Town Board members and others as to the activities taking place at the parks.

*Councilwoman Dufour* reported that Brian Belson, Town Building Inspector, has informed her that the property located at 5431 Old Saunders Settlement Road has been demolished.

Additionally, Councilwoman Dufour stated she was looking forward to having Jill Lederhouse, Town Assessor, address the Town Board with a progress report on the current re-valuation process.

#### 5. **Supervisor's Comments/Reports**

**Grass Cutting** - Supervisor Smith reported that the Town Building Dept. has also been notifying homeowners as well as the banks of the Town's Property Maintenance Ordinance, as to ensure that occupied and foreclosed properties are being properly maintained.

**TEP Tiger Transportation Grant Application** – The Town will be applying under the "landscaping/beautification" portion of the grant which will be for beautification of the Transit North Corridor. Rob Klavoon will be developing a floral planting program for that area.

Councilman Siejak asked if the TEP grant funding could be used solely for the Transit North project since a previous application for street scaping/beautification of the Transit North area had been denied. He questioned if this grant funding could be targeted for other areas of need such as sidewalks/bicycle accessibility for the Dysinger/Robinson Road area. Supervisor Smith stated that when applications involve a State highway, the State must be the lead agent in the grant application process. Supervisor Smith stated they will continue to cooperate with the State for grant funding for those areas in the future.

**Town Leak Detection System** – Supervisor Smith reported that Town Water Dept. had recently tested a new, more improved leak detection system which proved to be very effective in determining leaks. Mr. Klavoon and Town personnel believe that the Town may be able to sell the Town's current system and look into the purchase of this improved leak detection. Councilman Crocker added that it must be determined that any new equipment be required to work with all types of water systems as the Town has a variety of ages and a variety of different materials utilized for the water lines.

**New Operations Dept. Manager** - Councilman Siejak questioned if the Town had received any information from the State as to the approval of this new position by the NYS Legislature. Supervisor Smith stated he had not heard anything but is hoping that the Legislature will take action sometime in June.

**Health Care Cost Increase** – The Supervisor reported that after meeting with the Town's provider, it is projected that the Town's health care cost will increase by 45% effective June 1, 2013. He stated that this is partly due to the national health care plan that was adopted as well as due to some major claims put forth by the Town in 2013. Other health care providers were investigated for competitive figures but they resulted in nearly the same outcome for projected costs. He also added that a 15-20% additional increase is projected for June 2014.

#### **Report by the Assessor**

Jill Lederhouse gave an update of the current re-valuation process stating that she had approximately 80 grievances filed and completed 40 informal hearings. She reported that over the last few years the Town has re-assessed small neighborhoods that had not been re-evaluated in several years. These assessments however have not kept up with market values and it is becoming harder to maintain the 100% valuation that the State requires. Falling below the 100% equalization rate will leave the Town subject to loss of such services as State veterans' exemptions and the STAR exemptions for Town property owners. It is her recommendation that a full town-wide re-assessment be conducted as soon as possible to ensure that the Town assessments are appropriate and that the Town will remain at the 100% level. She added that typically when a full re-evaluation is done, the tax rate is lowered. A comprehensive re-assessment for the Town has not been done in several years. She will also try to do a few educational sessions for residents when the re-evaluation is begun.

#### **6. Executive Session Entered**

**MOTION (2013-120)** to enter Executive Session for consultation with the Town Attorney was made by Council Member Crocker and seconded by Council Member Dufour. The motion was CARRIED: AYES-5, NAYS-0. Voting AYE: Antkowiak, Siejak, Crocker, Dufour and Smith.

The Town Board entered Executive Session at 1:46 p.m.

#### **7. Executive Session Ended and Work Session Reconvened**

**MOTION (2013-121)** to exit Executive Session and to reconvene the work session was made by Council Member Siejak and seconded by Council Member Antkowiak. The motion was CARRIED: AYES-5, NAYS-0. Voting AYE: Antkowiak, Siejak, Crocker, Dufour and Smith.

The work session was reconvened at 2:25 p.m. with no action taken during Executive Session.

#### **8. Adjournment**

**MOTION (2013-122)** to adjourn was made by Council Member Antkowiak and seconded by Council Member Crocker. The motion was CARRIED: AYES-5, NAYS-0. Voting AYE: Antkowiak, Siejak, Crocker, Dufour and Smith.

The meeting ended at 2:25 p.m. The Lockport Town Board will next meet at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 5, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Brooks, RMC, MMC  
Lockport Town Clerk