

Minutes of the Town of Westport Regular Board Meeting on April 12, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Tyler at 7:00 p.m.

Members present on a roll call were:

Councilperson Page
Councilperson Viens
Councilperson Morrison
Supervisor Tyler
Excused: Councilperson Paquette

Others present:

Julie Schreiber, Town Clerk
Dennie Westover, DPW Superintendent
Laura Sells-Doyle, John H. Doyle, Richard Arndt, Phyllis Perna, Meredith Johnston, Bill Johnston, Clay Reaser, Curdie Gardner, Linda Smyth, Heidi Sweet, Chris Maron, Deirdre Forcier, Tom Broderick, Sheera Broderick, Cynthia Schira

RESOLUTION #84 MINUTES MARCH 28, 2017

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Morrison, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the March 28, 2017 Regular Board Meeting as received.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Chris Maron spoke about the spring cleanup planned for May 19-20 and asked if the town would charge for large items. Supervisor Tyler said that the landfill breaks even and not charging for such items may upset the budget. Councilperson Page added that it may be a good idea to provide free days in the future. Large items and their corresponding fees will be listed on the application form. Town employees will pick up items on Friday, while volunteers will run Saturday.

RESOLUTION #85 SPRING CLEANUP

On a motion by Councilperson Page, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved on a roll call vote.

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4 Ayes Page, Vines, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to approve the Spring Cleanup Plan, pending final authorization by Supervisor Tyler.

JUNK CARS – The letter was approved in February. A mailing list was obtained from the county and letters will be sent to 814 households. The Beautiful Westport Committee asked that the town cover the cost of stamps.

RESOLUTION #86
JUNK CAR MAILING

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Page, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize the expenditure of up to \$410 for the mailing of the Beautiful Westport Committee's junk vehicle letter.

REPORT ON BAKKEN OIL TRAINS – Meredith Johnston introduced a video presentation that discussed the hazardous waste trains traveling through our area. She asked that the town pass a proposed resolution calling for a moratorium of Bakken oil along the Lake Champlain railway; this was read aloud by concerned community members. Councilperson Page said that this is probably the greatest peril we have here and Councilperson Viens said that we should join other towns in support.

RESOLUTION #87
CALL FOR MORATORIUM ON TRANSPORT OF BAKKEN OIL

On a motion by Councilperson Page, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

WHEREAS, volatile, highly flammable, Bakken crude oil from North Dakota, containing elevated concentrates of benzene and other potent carcinogens, is transported by rail from Montreal to Albany along Lake Champlain through Essex County and on down the Hudson Valley; and

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WHEREAS, the consequences of a derailment would be tragic, for at stake is the drinking water from Lake Champlain for 145,000 people; the possible loss of life and property in Plattsburgh and small towns near its shore, including their schools, playgrounds, homes, businesses, farms, and churches; a devastating environmental impact on Lake Champlain and thus to the tourism it generates which is critical to local economies; and

WHEREAS, Bakken crude oil is poisonous to aquatic life as demonstrated by deformities in many species of fish caused by Bakken oil spills; and

WHEREAS, numerous accidents around the country demonstrate that Bakken crude oil cannot be recovered or cleaned up if it is spilled into a waterway; and

WHEREAS, Bakken oil train tankers are prone to derail and rupture, and are often referred to as “Bomb Trains” because of horrific accidents such as the one in Lac Mégantic, Quebec in 2013 where a train carrying Bakken crude oil derailed, sending out a huge fire ball that burned 47 people to death and destroyed 30 buildings; and

WHEREAS, the explosive nature of Bakken crude oil poses unacceptable danger to first responders and other emergency personnel; and

WHEREAS, nationally, Bakken oil train traffic has been on the rise and accidents have increased nearly sixteen fold between 2010 and 2014 and continued into 2015 and 2016; and

WHEREAS, there have been at least six accidents involving oil trains between 2012 and 2016 in New York state alone; and

WHEREAS, the railroads do not carry adequate insurance in the event of derailment; costs of derailment have and would be born by taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers bear all the risks and receive virtually no benefit because the state serves only as a conduit for this dangerous cargo which is destined for export abroad; and

WHEREAS, a number of cities, towns, and counties in New York, including Plattsburgh, Champlain, Saranac, Beekmantown, Peru, Keene, Cornwall-on-Hudson, and Phillipstown; Clinton and Ulster Counties; as well as Burlington, Vt. have passed resolutions calling for actions to protect their communities from the risk of oil train derailments; and

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WHEREAS, claims of federal preemption (because of the interstate commerce clause) by the crude-by-rail industry have stymied state and local efforts to protect New York communities and waterways from catastrophic spills and explosions.

NEW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Westport New York calls upon the United States Department of Transportation, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the New York State Department of Transportation, and Department of Environmental Conservation to impose a moratorium on the transport of Bakken oil from Montreal to Albany until a comprehensive study determines the public health and safety, and economic and environmental impact of a Bakken oil train derailment along the Lake Champlain railway corridor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Westport will mail copies of this Resolution to the United States Department of Transportation, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Congresswoman Elise M. Stefanik; Governor Andrew Cuomo, DEC Commissioner Basil Saggos, and Essex County NY Board of Supervisors.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

YOUTH COMMISSION – Supervisor Tyler asked if there has been any discussion on the Ski Program. There was concern with the number of adults attending. They will need to take a better look at the chaperone-to-student ratio in the future.

TOWN HALL RENOVATION – Offices will be moving to the Chazy Westport Phone Office on Monday and Tuesday and should be operational by the end of the week. There is a meeting this Friday to go over building contracts.

RESOLUTION #88
APPROVAL OF BILLS

On a motion by Councilperson Morrison, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize the payment of bills on Abstract 4A in the amount of \$43,531.30 for Vouchers 2017-182 through 2017-225.

RESOLUTION #89
RENOVATION CHECKING ACCOUNT

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On a motion by Councilperson Page, seconded by Councilperson Morrison, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize the set up of a separate checking account for the Westport Community Center Renovation Project.

RESOLUTION #90
RENOVATION CONTRACTS

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Page, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize Supervisor Tyler to sign the contracts for the Westport Community Center Renovation Project for the bull bid amounts.

RESOLUTION #91
WAIVE PERFORMANCE AND PAYMENT BOND

On a motion by Councilperson Morrison, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to waive the Performance and Payment bond for High Peak Carpentry and accept a certified check in an escrow account.

MONTHLY REPORTS – The supervisor is in receipt of the Town Court's and Town Clerk's March reports.

DPW SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – Dennie and Councilperson Viens looked at the equipment sale in Watertown. They didn't see what they were looking for, but there was a decent supply. There will be a larger sale on May 31st and Dennie recommended sending someone to that (he will be out of town). They have had problems with grease at the sewer plant. Regulations are set by the town ordinance and building codes, however Dennie is concerned that this would only apply to new buildings. He will meet with Supervisor Tyler for further discussion.

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The CHIPS budget passed and Dennie will start measuring roads tomorrow. The Lewis Quarry is offering discounted item #4 to the county and Dennie mentioned that they might want to purchase some. He will make a request at the next meeting. The new excavator arrived yesterday.

BID OPENING – The following bids were received for the sale of the 2003 Ford F250:
Tyler Atwell: \$225.25
Richard Fields: \$540.00

RESOLUTION #92
AWARD TRUCK BID

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Morrison, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to award the sale of the 2003 Ford F250 to Richard Fields for \$540.

TRANSFER STATION HOURS – The transfer station will resume full time hours starting the first week of May. Hours will be Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8:00 to 3:45.

RESOLUTION #93
SURPLUS

On a motion by Councilperson Page, seconded by Councilperson Morrison, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Page, Viens, Morrison, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to declare the following items surplus: desk #136 and #194; safe #33, and file cabinets #22, #23, and #24.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Curdie Gardner mentioned that a lunch will be provided at the May 21st Spring Fest. She asked if the town could fund a dinner. Supervisor Tyler stated that funds are not available in the budget and suggested they seek donations. Deirdre Forcier asked if it's possible to put up signs to alert drivers of the Amish buggies. Dennie responded that this has been a major concern, but the town cannot post signs. It may be possible for the county to post signs; Supervisor Tyler will do further research.

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RESOLUTION #94
ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilperson Morrison, with a unanimous second, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Julie Schreiber, Town Clerk