

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
TOWN BOARD MEETING
January 4, 2021**

At 7:02 p.m. the Westford Town Organizational Meeting was called to order.

Flag Salute was recited.

Present: Town Supervisor Walter Heinrich, Councilman Feil, Councilman Huntington, and Councilman Ritton and Councilman Zerby

Other Town Officials: Highway Superintendent -Jason Ritton, Town Assessor- Pamela Dyn-Gohde, Town Judge-Michael Fay and Town Clerk- Eileen Ten Eyck.

The sign-in sheet is on file with the Town Clerk.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING:

Resolution #1 for 2021- Supervisor Hienrich provided an organizational chart which includes updated information of the officials, businesses and boards associated with the operation of the Town of Westford.

Supervisor Heinrich read over the organizational chart and that has been attached to the January 2021 minutes. He made mention that there is an opening on the Planning Board and Board of Assessment Review; anyone interested should contact him. Supervisor Heinrich suggested that the monthly Board Meeting be changed to the second Monday of the month to accommodate the needs of the new bookkeepers.

Motion by Supervisor Heinrich to change the Westford Board Meetings to the second Monday of each month, seconded by Councilman Ritton. Unanimous ayes.

An amendment was made to the organizational chart to reflect the date of meeting change. The new schedule will begin on March 8, 2021.

Supervisor Heinrich made a motion to accept the organizational chart as amended, seconded by Councilman Ritton. Unanimous ayes.

The Organization Meeting Concluded at 7:12 p.m. and the regular meeting was called to order.

CORRECTIONS TO DECEMBER 4, 2020 MINUTES:

Under New Correspondence –
#1 changed the word “there” to “they”
#3 changed “Highway employee” to “Town of Westford employee”
#11 changed “show” to “showing”

Under Gallery: correction to rates paid to employees. The equalized pay amounts are \$15.00/hour for Joe and \$14.50/hour for Matt.

Motion by Councilman Ritton to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Councilman Huntington. Unanimous ayes

OLD CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1). Pave New York money was received and has been deposited.
- 2). Judge Fay's audit was conducted and completed by Councilman Ritton and will be submitted to the Office of Court Administration by Supervisor Heinrich.
- 3). 2017 AUD report - there was a \$30,000 discrepancy that the Comptroller's Office was willing to write off as "other expenses" after failed attempts to locate how and where this money was spent. The 2018, 2019 and 2020 AUD reports will be prepared by Evening Star (new bookkeepers).
- 4). Direct Deposit is now available. The \$300 per month insurance stipend for the Highway Department will be split amongst their 26 paycheck.
- 5). Supervisor Heinrich followed up on the CD the town had at the Bank of Cooperstown. The CD was withdrawn from the bank and deposited in the highway account and used for town equipment.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1). Pam Dyn Gohde (assessor/land use officer) will be offering office hours at the Town Hall on Mondays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. An ad will be placed in the newspaper to inform of the new office hours.

COMMITTEES:

Cemetery: No new report.

Fire Department: There was discussion about having the water tested once the system at Town Hall has been flushed. Members of the Fire Department are able to get their COVID 19 shots if they choose to do so.

Highway:

- 1). Supervisor Heinrich and Highway Superintendent Ritton both researched, through the State and Comptroller's Office, how purchases may be made through auction sites . There are exemptions which allows purchases on auction sites as long as the equipment is purchased from a municipality (state, federal or local). The other issue was a resolution

in 2018 that anything over \$5000 requires three written quotes brought before the Board.

Motion by Councilman Ritton to revisit the organizational meeting to include an exemption for the purchasing policy which states that equipment bought from municipalities by auction are exempt from the procurement policy, but that the Town Board will be responsible for setting a ceiling for such purchases. Seconded by Councilman Huntington. Unanimous ayes.

2). The Highway employees requested a change to the Employees Manual that was last updated in 2017. There was a request for additional holidays. They currently get New Years, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day.

Motion by Supervisor Heinrich to add two additional holidays- Columbus Day and Veteran's Day- to the Employee's Manual for the Town of Westford. Seconded by Councilman Huntington. Unanimous ayes.

The employee manual will need to be updated. This undertaking will be done in 2021.

3). Personal Leave- Supervisor Heinrich made an executive decision with the new bookkeepers and had the time accumulated by Highway employees carried over from 2020 to 2021. Leave time is now available to eligible employees at the beginning of each year instead of being accrued month to month as it had been in years past. Copies of leave times for employees were made available by the Town Supervisor.

4). Wifi connection through OEC at the Town Barn has begun.

Transfer Station: No new report.

NEW CORRESPONDENCE:

1). A Notice from Dept of Treasury was received informing that the town is approved for electronic transfers of monies for our federal tax bill in 2021.

2). A Notice from the Unified Court System requesting an audit of Judge Fay's books was received. The audit has been completed and will be submitted by the Town Supervisor.

3). A bill from the Department of Labor in the amount of \$6.20 was received and paid.

4). The end of the year budget was discussed. The Highway Fund was not in deficit this year and there is money to cover January bills. The General Fund account is also in the black this year, there was a savings of approximately \$5,000 by keeping the previous bookkeeper through the year and a \$5,000 savings on our tipping fees. There was an overage in the personal services for the garbage of \$1,400, this year's account has been adjusted for the 2021 budget. The Town also received \$6,000 more than was budgeted

for sales tax, so there is money in the account to pay January and February bills. However, Supervisor Heinrich is anticipating that there will be additional fees owed for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 AUD reports.

5). The Governor has mandated that the Town provide “paid family leave” and “family disability.” This used to be required only for full-time employees, but has been changed to include part-time employees as well. The employees for the Transfer Station need to be added. Should someone go out on leave due to COVID or a family member has COVID and the employee has to stay home, the paid family leave would cover the cost.

Motion by Supervisor Heinrich to pay the fees for paid family leave and disability family leave from the Standard Security Life Insurance Company in the amount of \$1,009.55, seconded by Councilman Huntington. Unanimous ayes.

BUDGET MEETING:

General: #264 – #276 -\$17,986.81

Highway: #247 – #251 – \$5,884.58

Motion by Councilman Feil to adjourn the January meeting, seconded by Councilman Zerby. Unanimous ayes

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.