

Town Board Meeting

May 13, 2021

The Town Board of the Town of Stuyvesant held their monthly meeting on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 7:00pm. In attendance were Supervisor Knott; Councilmembers Kelley Williams, Tom Burrall, and Bill Schneider; Highway Superintendent Charles Stiffler; Town Clerk Melissa Naegeli; and Attorney for the Town Tal Rappleyea. Not in attendance was Councilman Brian Chittenden.

The meeting was held at the Town Hall, and was a hybrid meeting. There were members of the public in attendance as well as 5 attendees online.

Supervisor Knott called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

A motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting was made by Tom Burrall. The motion was seconded by Bill Schneider and was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the bills presented was made by Kelley Williams. The motion was seconded by Tom Burrall and was approved by unanimous vote.

Correspondence

A letter from Bob Clark regarding bridges in Stuyvesant. Mr. Clark was in attendance at the meeting and was invited to speak at the end of the meeting.

Old Business

Town Hall Telephone System -- Supervisor Knott reported that a meeting was held with Spectrum regarding the new phone system and it is expected to be installed in the coming week.

Proposed Parking Law – Councilman Bill Schneider said he has a few questions about this: Have we had complaints in places other than Sunnyside Road? Who would enforce the Law? Where would the signs go? Supervisor Knott said yes, we have had complaints in places other than Sunnyside Road. Police can only enforce the no parking restrictions if there is a law on the books. The Town would determine where the signs would go.

Lee Jamison asked about the parking restriction on Town roads during the winter. Councilman Schneider asked how those restrictions are enforced. Tal

Rappleyea explained that those temporary restrictions placed by the Highway Superintendent are covered in the NYS Highway Laws.

Steve Montie said the no parking signs on private property doesn't allow for ticketing. Tal Rappleyea explained that a private property owner can have vehicles towed but they won't be ticketed.

Lee Jamison said she thought the Local Law would just give the Town carte blanche authority to determine parking in the Town and that it seems to be arbitrary and capricious and only being brought up to target people using the trail.

Supervisor Knott explained that the Local Law would allow us to put up the signs and have them enforced. He reiterated that there have been numerous complaints.

Tom Burrall made a motion to schedule a public hearing on the proposed Local Law for Parking in Stuyvesant. The motion was seconded by Kelley Williams and was approved by unanimous vote. The Public Hearing was scheduled for June 10th and Melissa Naegeli will put the notice in the paper.

Speeding in Stuyvesant Falls – Supervisor Knott reported he hasn't received the report from the Sheriff's Department yet due to a computer problem.

Ken Hummel Scholarship – Supervisor Knott explained that because we couldn't hold any fundraisers in 2020, we wouldn't be able to fund the annual scholarship. Public funds cannot be used for this.

Trash Day – Highway Superintendent Chuck Stiffler reported that we filled 6 50 yd. dumpsters. 27.5 Ton. There were 140 tires. Two of the dumpsters were metal only and we were paid \$940. He added that this was the busiest trash day since he's been back working in the Highway Department.

Supervisor Knott added that Lee Jamison had organized the Riversweep Clean Up event for the same day. He thanked the Highway Department for a well-organized and well run trash day. Lee Jamison said there were 38 volunteers for Riversweep, with 10 of them being kids. She added that she felt the lawn signs advertising the Trash Day were effective. Supervisor Knott also thanked the Register Star Reporter, Aliya Schneider, for getting the information in to the newspaper.

Reports

Town Clerk – Report is on file

Recreation Committee – Supervisor Knott reported that he had been contacted by a resident requesting the tennis courts be cleaned and if the backboard could be reinstalled. He asked Councilman Burrall to work with the Fire Companies to have the courts cleaned again. Supervisor Knott said he will get additional information about the backboard.

Councilwoman Kelley Williams reported that the Town of Kinderhook Playground will be held July 6th through August 13th. Melissa Naegeli reminded everyone that Stuyvesant residents must pre-register with her and receive a coupon to take advantage of the Town paying the fees.

Highway Superintendent Chuck Stiffler asked about the status of the picnic tables being built. Councilman Burrall said he hoped they would be done soon. Supervisor Knott said we should just buy 2 or 3 tables. A motion was made by Bill Schneider to purchase 3 new picnic tables. The motion as seconded by Kelley Williams and was approved by unanimous vote.

Councilman Schneider asked if the Recreation Committee could organize a bike safety program that would highlight the trail use. Supervisor Knott said he had spoken previously with Sheriff Bartlett about holding a bicycle rodeo. There was a discussion about holding this type of event in Stuyvesant Falls. Melissa Naegeli will reach out to the Sheriff's Department and the Church of St. Joseph to get it scheduled and planned.

Councilman Schneider asked if we could put signs up at the trail in Stuyvesant Falls pointing people to Overlook Park. Lee Jamison said at the trail meetings they had discussed putting information on their website with maps directing visitors to off-trail sites. There was a discussion about whether signs would be allowed on the trail. Supervisor Knott recommended that Councilman Schneider contact Andy Beers at the State for information.

Railroad Station Committee – Supervisor Knott reported that with money from fundraisers the attic was recently able to be insulated. He worked with Cal Burch, Richard Moran, Rich Anderson, and Christian Sweningson to get the project completed.

Lee Jamison reported that the Rhubarb “drive by” Festival held on May 8th at the Town Hall had raised \$544.

Environmental Management Council – Lee Jamison gave a report in Christian Sweningson’s absence:

- Good Earthkeeping Awards – the application forms are available on the EMC page at the County website. Categories are 2 for Youth (13-17) Individual and Group, 4 for Adults (18+) Individual, Group or Organization, Business, and Education. Submission deadline is May 17th at 7pm
- Solarize Chatham – Chatham’s Climate Smart Committee has organized an outreach campaign for a community solar program. They have researched companies that will allow residents to buy into solar farms where the electricity is returned to the grid and residents could potentially see 10% savings in their electricity bills.
- Climate Smart Communities – Bill Mancini (Village of Kinderhook) reported that the Village Board had passed a resolution to join in a community solar for municipal buildings. He added that he will speak with the Town of Kinderhook’s Board regarding the solarized program. Chairman O’Hara noted that the Municipal Electric and Gas Alliance (MEGA) is the administration of the Capital Region Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Program. This is a bulk electricity purchasing program for residents and small businesses which offers better rates and provides renewable electricity.
- Zero Waste Columbia – Cara Humphrey reported Cornell Cooperative Extension webinar on Composting will be held in May and a flyer will be distributed. Bruce Shenker reported that New Lebanon is making plans to create a Repair Café.
- Updated Natural Resource Inventory Training will be held online on May 17th and 19th. Councilman Schneider asked if all of the Planning and Zoning Boards members had attended this training. Supervisor Knott reported that he will check with Tana about sending information to the members.

Dog Control – Report on file.

Kinderhook Memorial Library – Lee Jamison reported that she wasn't able to attend the meeting the previous night. She added that they Committee is intending to do a 414 Resolution for the General Election and that the President of the Library usually comes to the Board with a presentation.

Office for the Aging – No report

Highway Department – Highway Superintendent Chuck Stiffler reported:

- Trash Day was the largest one he could remember
- Working on cleaning out ditches
- The sides of the new road in to the Sandbar Park has new topsoil and has been seeded
- He is getting prices to do paving. We have approximately \$190,000 to spend and he is finding that the prices have increased. He is planning to pave Eichyush and Requa Roads. We aren't sure what the plans are for Ferry Road yet.
- Steve Montie will be retiring effective June 6th and we will be looking for an employee. Supervisor Knott commented that the County is also looking for Highway Department employees.

Assessor's Office – Cathy Knott, Assessor's Clerk, reported that the letters notifying property owners to changes in their assessments are out. People can make an appointment to discuss their assessment with the Assessor, Lynn Hotaling. Grievance Day will be Thursday, May 27th 4pm – 8pm. The Board will be in person in the Town Hall and the public is invited to grieve their assessments remotely. The forms will be accepted up to Grievance Day.

Planning / Zoning Boards – Supervisor Knott reported that there are Public Hearings scheduled for both Boards at their May meetings.

Town Historian – Cathy Knott, Deputy Historian, reported that she and Juanita Knott, Historian, will be cleaning the gravestones in Town cemeteries and will start in the Butler Cemetery in June. They will be looking for volunteers to sign up and asked that the word get spread.

Historic Stuyvesant Day picnic will be held on August 14th. We aren't sure what the rules will be so watch for details as restrictions change.

Steve Montie, Chief of Stuyvesant Fire Co. #1, commented that he will speak with the fire company to help with water for cleaning the gravestones.

ZEO/Building Inspector – Peter Bujanow reported that in April he issued 6 building permits and completed 8 record search requests – 15 to date. The revenues are \$112,000 or \$628,000 in construction value.

He also reported that he is answering numerous inquiries and fielding many complaints. Supervisor Knott commented that the mortgage tax for the last 6 months has been very good.

Cemetery – Andrew Powell has been hired to mow the cemetery and has started the season.

Town Hall – Highway Superintendent Chuck Stiffler reported that he is waiting for prices on cracking sealing the parking lot.

County Business

Supervisor Knott reported that there was a Public Hearing at the full Board meeting regarding the DEC amendment to allow 12-13 year olds to hunt big game with a licensed adult. The County passed and adopted the amendment.

The federal stimulus money to the county will be approximately \$11.5M, to be received over the next 2 years. Guidelines will be received within the next 2 weeks and will probably not be very flexible. When the Town receives their stimulus money, Supervisor Knott will keep it in a separate account to make tracking the expenses easier.

New Business

A joint workshop with the Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and Building Inspector will be held on the regular Town Board Workshop night, June 3rd at 7pm. Melissa Naegeli will put a public notice in the newspaper.

Supervisor Knott reported that a Broadband Committee has been established and he has asked Councilman Bill Schneider to Chair the Committee.

Supervisor Knott further reported that he had asked Spectrum for a map of their coverage areas. Spectrum allowed him to look at the map but he was not allowed to keep a copy of it. Councilman Schneider explained that the County wants an inventory of services throughout the County using 100mb as a floor. They are discussing hiring a firm to do a complete inventory of the County,

every house. There are two companies the County is considering; one said it can be completed in 12 weeks, the other said 12 months. The company will work to identify where the need exists then work with the providers to get service coverage.

There was a question from the audience that if we have franchise agreements with these service providers, can't we compel them to provide internet coverage. Supervisor Knott explained that franchise agreements with the providers are only for cable services. We have two providers in Town. If Mid-Hudson was willing to come in and provide service to those who can't get it from current providers, the others would have to sign off on that.

Once we know where the services aren't, we can go to the companies – there are rules about where they're required to go. The CEDC is looking at internet access no longer being a luxury but a necessity. There is a subcommittee meeting that Bill would like to attend.

Councilman Schneider disclosed that his son works for a company in Seattle that does survey work of this type and has given the contact information to the County.

A question from the audience about a rumor about Verizon and AT&T putting up 5G towers along Route 9. Councilman Schneider said he would as the CEDC if they know about that.

There was a question about whether there was money set aside for broadband. Supervisor Knott explained that most of Stuyvesant is covered but they did coverage. Spectrum made a deal with the State and lowered their requirement of 30 houses per mile to 20 houses per mile. Most of the Spectrum money went to the eastern part of the County where a lot of build out happened to meet the State guidelines for the money.

There was a discussion about how to compel internet companies to provide service to people not currently being covered and how to gather the information on those not being served. Tom Spurge said he has a group of people ready to help compile the information.

Supervisor Knott reported that there is new Federal assistance for low income families to receive assistance with their broadband bills. He will give the information to Melissa Naegeli to add to the website.

Bob Clark presented to the Board regarding 2 “extremely” dangerous bridges in Stuyvesant; Schoolhouse Road bridge and the railroad bridge over Ridge Road.

Mr. Clark is a retired Engineer and feels these bridges are “in danger of imminent collapse”. Mr. Clark gave a brief history of his previous warnings to the Town about Schoolhouse Road bridge, which resulted in the State red-flagging the bridge and it being shut down in 2007.

Mr. Clark provided to the Board full packages of his reports for their review. The bridge over Ridge Road carries freight trains. The railroad inspection reports are confidential. Mr. Clark would like a letter sent to Congressman Delgado requesting his assistance.

Mr. Clark said in his opinion the bridges are so deteriorated an Engineer wouldn't be able to make a load/weight recommendation. He is requesting the Board be interested and to reach out to the railroad for them to perform the necessary maintenance.

Cathy Knott, on behalf of the Stuyvesant-on-Hudson Garden Club, presented a donated bench from their group to replace one that had deteriorated on the front porch of the Town Hall.

A member of the audience asked if Supervisor Knott or Chuck Stiffler knew anything about any plans to resurface 9J. Chuck Stiffler explained that is a State highway. Supervisor Knott reported the State has more funding but doesn't know the status of any plans for 9J.

Melissa Naegeli announced the Town Clerk's Office would be closed June 10th through the 19th due to her having surgery. She will be able to remotely access phone messages and email messages.

With no further business before the Board, Kelley Williams made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Bill Schneider and was approved by unanimous vote.

The following is an abstract of vouchers presented to the Board for approval:

	<i>May 2021</i>			LIGHTS	
CLAIM	PAYEE	A/C#	GENERAL	LND/FALLS	HIGHWAY
21-128	Time Warner Cable (\$671.52)	1620.4	384.93		
		5132.4	286.59		
21-129	NYS Office of State Comptroller	A2610	7.00		
21-130	Sickler, Torchia, Allen & Churchill CPAs	1320.4	8,707.70		
21-131	Colarusso Quarry	5110.4			186.71
21-132	CarQuest of Valatie	5130.4			202.34
21-133	Air Gas USA, LLC	5130.4			58.00
21-134	Share Corporation	5130.4			115.81
21-135	CDPHP Universal Benefits (1841.13)	9060.8	613.71		
		9060.8			1,227.42
21-136	National Grid (\$1420.00)	5182.4		690.74	
				729.26	
21-137	NYS Office of State Comptroller	A2610	466.00		
21-138	National Grid	5132.4	95.23		
21-139	National Grid	1620.4	22.70		
21-140	National Grid (RR Station)	1620.4	26.38		
21-141	Constellation (\$61.85)	1620.4	2.72		
		5132.4	59.13		
21-142	Quadient Finance USA, Inc.	1620.41	172.30		
21-143	Paychex of New York LLC	1320.4	275.30		
21-144	Johnson Newspaper Corporation	1355.4	59.03		
21-145	Repeat Business Systems (\$35.40)	5132.4	5.45		
		1620.41	29.95		
21-146	Marlin Business Bank (\$237.47)	1410.4	79.39		
		1620.41	158.08		
21-147	Rainbow Distributing Co., Inc.	5132.4	28.98		
21-148	Edmunds Gov Tech	1410.4	1,270.00		
21-149	Tal G. Rappleyea, Esq.	1420.4	1,625.00		
21-150	County Waste	5132.4	170.09		
21-151	Verizon Wireless	5010.4	62.66		
21-152	Mario's Home Center	1620.4	234.98		
21-153	Nancy Scans Corp.	8160.1	130.50		
21-154	Valley Energy	5132.4	191.21		
		5110.4			1,017.12

21-155	Monroe Tractor	5130.4			967.16
21-156	Mario's Home Center	5130.4			148.23
21-157	Charles Stiffler	5130.4			49.39
21-158	Pittsfield Communication Systems	5110.4			844.56
21-159	Mabey's Truck Service	5110.4			310.00
21-160	Mooradian Hydraulics & Equipment	5130.4			41.54
	5/6/2021		15,165.01	1,420.00	5,168.28
21-161	Edmunds GovTech	1620.41	150.00		
21-162	Sickler, Torchia, Allen & Churchill CPAs	1320.4	560.70		
21-163	Columbia County Treasurer (Solid Waste)	8160.4	3,590.53		
21-164	Staples, Inc.	1620.41	137.99		
21-165	SL Empire Solar I, LLC	1620.4	180.96		
21-166	Time Warner Cable (Town Hall)	1620.4	675.68		
21-167	Culligan	5132.4	28.93		
21-168	Wex Bank	7110.1	26.77		
21-169	Lowe's	5110.4			31.20
21-170	Air Gas USA LLC	5130.4			56.50
21-171	Car Quest of Valatie	5130.4			57.97
21-172	Tractor Supply Co.	5130.4			61.95
21-173	Mooradian Hydraulics & Equipment Co.	5130.4			185.90
21-174	Salem Farm Supply	5130.4			176.00
		13-May-21	5,351.56	-	569.52
		<i>May Totals</i>	20,516.57	1,420.00	5,737.80