

TOWN BOARD MEETING

May 8, 2017,
6:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councilpersons: Kevin Armstrong, Luis Rodriguez-Betancourt, Leonard Govern, Patty Wood, Supervisor Charles Gregory, Hwy. Supt Walt Geidel, Attorney Carly Walas and Town Clerk Ronda Williams

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lillian Browne – Walton Reporter, Bruce Dolph, Stephen Dutcher, Molly Oliver, Spencer Devaul, and Shelly Johnson

RESOLUTION #66

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt approving the minutes of April 10, 2017 as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

FLOOR TIME:

Spencer Devaul approached the Board and presented a power point on the NYC Land Acquisition Program and provided map overlays showing the different impacts each type of purchase has on our area.

During this presentation Mr. Devaul, Molly Oliver and Shelly Johnson for the Delaware County Planning Department further explained the impact the NYCDEP Land Acquisition purchases are having on our area.

Of the 54,514 acres of land in the watershed, only 23% or 12,571.73 are left of buildable land. NYCDEP is set to double their land purchases by 2018 so Mrs. Johnson expressed the importance of negotiation now to protect the future of building later. Currently in the town and village of Walton, only 5,286.76 acres are left available for potential buildable land. Mr. Devaul explained this was calculated on mapping only and not actual site visits, so it could potentially be less.

Mrs. Johnson explained that although the town protected land from solicitation with their land outside the village corridors, the town roads are not built for heavy truck traffic so that also limits potential business expansions.

Councilman Armstrong pointed out that NYC wants developable land because it limits development here and protects their water source.

Councilman Govern pointed out that NYC is the high bidder every time on land purchases and our local residents are unable to compete at \$2,500 – \$7,500 an acre.

Mr. Devaul stated that May 30, 2017 there will be a NYC and DEC presentation on Land Acquisition Projects for the Source Water Protection.

SUPERINTENDENT OF HWY. REPORT:

Reported that the new dodge truck has been received and would like to surplus the 2011 on Auctions International.

RESOLUTION #67

SURPLUS 2011 DODGE TRUCK

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Govern granting permission to surplus the 2011 Dodge truck and list on Auction International site for sale. All in favor, motion carried.

Reported that the converted 2003 freightliner truck is back from being repaired but would like to hold off on surplus of the old 10 wheeler to be sure everything is working properly with the freightliner.

TOWN CLERK’S REPORT:

Provided my financial reports to the Board.

Reported that tax collection is 88% collected and all unpaid taxes must now be collected by the Delaware County Treasurer. I will be returning a total amount of \$498,846.28 as uncollected.

I presented the board with proposals for a new copier:

DBS	\$3,806.00	Includes a trade-in for old machine
Eastern	\$2,799.00	Will move old copier upstairs- free of charge

RESOLUTION #68

PURCHASE NEW COPIER MACHINE

A motion was made by Councilman Govern, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt granting permission to purchase a Konica Minolta bizhub 308 from Eastern Managed Print Network for \$2,799.00. All in favor, motion carried.

I informed the Board that a Use of Facilities request was received for the use of More Park for a Ham Radio overnight event on June 24 and June 25, 2017. I informed the Board that they have also requested the use of electric during their event. Discussion took place about contacting the Walton Booster Club about the electrical service from the pole located on the Town of Walton property. Supervisor Gregory spoke in favor of the group and stated they are very helpful during emergency events. Highway Superintendent Geidel echoed the Supervisors comments.

RESOLUTION #69

MORE PARK USE OF FACILITY APPROVAL

A motion was made by Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt, seconded by Govern granting permission to hold an American Radio Relay League Field Day at More Park on June 24-June 25, 2017. All in favor, motion carried.

CEO/DOG CONTROL REPORT:

Provided his monthly reports to the Board.

Reported that the dog list is progressing.

Reported that there will be information coming for the community rating system. Flood Manager Dutcher stated that no action was required from the Board, which he would just pass along the information when received.

Reported that the Flood Commission met and did a walk through around the proposed excavation area on Water Street, as well as the area behind the County Store. This will provide feedback of the potential use of the areas. Discussion took place on how to improve the view of Delaware Street and if potential grant money is available.

Code Office Dutcher stated some ideas where to remove the utility poles on Delaware Street.

Councilwoman Wood questioned what benefit would have on Walton and was it a good idea to bury power lines in a flood area? Code Officer Dutcher stated it would make Delaware Street look a lot better which is a goal for the business district and they have material that would provide a safe burial.

Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt stated this would also provide an opportunity for new sidewalks and on street parking.

Councilman Govern stated the power lines on the North side are a detriment to the fire department personnel hindering them to get to the buildings with an aerial ladder safely.

Superintendent Geidel commented that slower traffic on Delaware Street would be beneficial to the businesses.

SUPERVISOR’S REPORT:

Supervisor Gregory requested permission to grant approval of a CDBG grant recipients’ #WTHRCD-4 and #WTHRCD-5. He informed the public that money is still available but you must act quickly.

RESOLUTION #70

CDBG GRANT AWARDS #4-#5

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Wood granting approval of CDBG Grant #4-5 for \$85,830.00 as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

A request from the building and maintenance department to purchase a new lawn mower not to exceed \$240.00.

RESOLUTION #71

PURCHASE NEW LAWN MOWER

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to purchase a new lawn mower not to exceed \$240.00. All in favor, motion carried.

Supervisor Gregory informed the Board that Veterans Plaza will not be done before the Memorial Day Parade and requested pushing the date out until June 17, 2017 at 10:00a.m.

Supervisor Gregory reported that the Veterans Plaza will be used from July 5th – September 20th for the purpose of holding a Farmers Market on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.

Reported that the Town will be moving forward with timber harvesting behind the Town of Walton Highway Garage. Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt questioned if it will be a harvest and replant project? Supervisor Gregory will look into this.

Reported that the computers at the Town Hall are using older software and are in need of an upgrade. Supervisor Gregory stated he would like to do this in June.

Supervisor Gregory reported on the proposed South River Road project. He informed the Board that the property owner is not willing to grant a right of way but Flood Plain Manager Dutcher came up with a solution by entering NYC property and come out on Beers Brook.

Supervisor Gregory stated he is not interested in eminent domain but instead a possible right away across NYC property. After discussion, the Board was in agreement to look into this further.

Supervisor Gregory brought back to the table the Complete Streets Agreement. Councilwoman Wood stated if it does not commit us to costly road work, she was in agreement to looking into it further.

Supervisor Gregory suggested tabling the matter and coming back with a revised draft for the Board to review.

Supervisor Gregory along with the support of the Board proposed the following resolution in opposition of the Village of Walton moving forward with a Bio-Digester.

TITLE: RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE VILLAGE OF WALTON TO FOLLOW NEW YORK STATE COMPTROLLER'S RECOMMENDATION TO ABANDON THE VILLAGE'S BIO-DIGESTER PROJECT

WHEREAS, the New York State Comptroller's Office performed an audit of the Village of Walton Bio-Digester Capital Planⁱ covering the period of June 1, 2015 to August 16, 2016, and;

WHEREAS, the audit determined that adding a bio-digester subjects the village to significant risks if the potential users discontinue operations or opt not to use the bio-digester, the village will continue to incur substantial costs,ⁱⁱ and

WHEREAS, village officials have stated that the cost of the project would be fully covered by the fees from three companies disposing of organic waste byproduct,ⁱⁱⁱ and;

WHEREAS, it is unclear whether the largest of these companies intends to utilize the bio-digester^{iv}, and;

WHEREAS, the New York State Comptroller's Office considers it not to be prudent to rely on disposal fees from the largest company in cost -benefit analysis,^v and;

WHEREAS, the efforts to plan for the bio-digester have already cost the village of Walton \$451,000 which was financed by a \$650,000 bond anticipation note which will have to be repaid,^{vi} and

WHEREAS, the village is currently \$6,799,091.33 in debt^{vii}, and

WHEREAS, the largest company has decreased production by one-third, thus reducing their share of the operating costs of the village waste water treatment plant, necessitating the shifting of these costs to residential and other business users, resulting in higher water bills already for village users that will continue should that plant close and remain vacant for a substantial amount of time,^{viii} and;

WHEREAS, if the Bio-Digester were to prove unprofitable, the village tax payers would be held responsible making up the shortfall in operating expenses, and;

WHEREAS, the increase in village taxes to cover this shortfall would serve as a disincentive for businesses and perspective home buyers to invest in property within the village limits; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Walton strongly urges the Village to follow the Comptroller's recommendations^{ix} and

1. Consider abandoning the bi-digester project
2. Determine if the \$1.5million grant offered the village for bio-gas diversion can be used to pay for the \$451,000 of costs already incurred.

¹ NYS Comptroller Report of Examination, 2016M-378, Village of Walton Bio-Digester Capital Plan

¹ Ibid. Pg 4

¹ Ibid. Pg 5

¹ Ibid. Pg 5

¹ Ibid.

¹ Ibid. Pg 7

¹ Village of Walton 2017-2018 Budget dated June 1, 2017

¹ "1.15% Increase in Walton Village 2017-18 Budget", The Walton Reporter, 19 April 2017, Pg 5

¹ NYS Comptroller Report of Examination, 2016M-378, Village of Walton Bio-Digester Capital Plan, Pg 7

RESOLUTION #72

TITLE: RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE VILLAGE OF WALTON TO FOLLOW NEW YORK STATE COMPTROLLER'S RECOMMENDATION TO ABANDON THE VILLAGE'S BIO-DIGESTER PROJECT

A motion was made by Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt, seconded by Govern approving a resolution encouraging the Village of Walton to follow NYS Comptroller's recommendation to abandon the Village's Bio-Digester Project and for its release. Vote: Armstrong, Govern, Rodriguez-Betancourt, Wood and Supervisor Gregory – Yea, 0 Nays. Motion carried.

Reporter Lillian Browne asked for clarification on the villages water users and if the town were to absorb the village would the village residents still be fully responsible for that portion of the budget.

Councilman Armstrong stated his concerned would still be a burden on the entire town if the village residents could not afford to pay the bond on the bio-digester.

Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt question how much does it cost to run the village water system and how much does the company running it cost on a yearly basis? Supervisor Gregory stated that they receive funding from NYC to help offset the operations cost.

Councilwoman Wood stated she did not want this to become us versus them issue but feels it’s important to express the town’s concern.

Councilman Govern requested a link to the Village of Walton’s State Comptroller report be placed on the Town’s website.

Supervisor Gregory reported that he had attended a Shared Service meeting that informed him that the current shared services that the Town currently participates in will not count toward this new initiative. He questioned Deputy Secretary of State for Local Government Services, Mr. Mark P. Pattison why NYC was exempt from this program? Their response was that they are already doing shared services. He stated he asked why the State won’t recognize existing shared services agreements and was told “the Governor wants to see new initiatives”.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

RESOLUTION #73

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wood, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt approving the vouchers as presented for payment. All in favor, motion carried.

General Fund A	#88-100	\$22,631.01
General OV B	#	\$ None
General Hwy DA	#50-63	\$65,437.97
OV Hwy DB	#6-7	\$ 7,293.25
CDBG	#4-5	\$85,830.00

COMMITTEE REPORT:

Councilwoman Wood questioned what happened to the plants on the back lot of Veterans Plaza? Code Enforcement Officer Dutcher stated they have more than likely rotted due to all the water in that area. He recommended holding off with any other plantings until the remaining Water Street project is complete.

Supervisor Gregory stated that new sites have been proposed for the Public Works site and will keep the Board informed as information becomes available.

Supervisor Gregory stated that the design of the Mental Health building will soon be provided.

Supervisor Gregory stated that no confirmation has been received on a new location for the Office of the Aging yet.

Councilman Armstrong thanked the Town for the use of its chipper and excavator on the Fair Grounds.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

RESOLUTION #74

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wood, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing Kraft Litigation All in favor, motion carried.

Entered 7:30 p.m.

Motion by Councilman Govern, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to close executive session. All in favor, motion carried.

Out 8:15 p.m.

Supervisor Gregory informed the Board that the reassessment letter have been sent out and the Assessor has been very busy.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronda Williams
Town Clerk

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