

TOWN BOARD MEETING

September 12, 2022

6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councilpersons: Kevin Armstrong, Luis Rodriguez-Betancourt, Supervisor Joseph Cetta, Attorney Carly Walas, Jeff Offnick, Highway Superintendent, and Town Clerk Ronda Williams

ABSENT: Patty Wood, Leonard Govern

OTHERS PRESENT: Rusty and Sharon Way, Walter Geidel, Beatrice Bennett, Jim Bowker, Lillian Browne-Brudick – The Reporter

FLOOR TIME:

Jim Bowker of Dunk Hill Road returned to inquire of the Town's decision on replacing a sluice pipe at the entrance of his driveway. Supervisor Cetta stated they had just received the Counties policy and have not had a chance to review with the Highway Committee. Supervisor Cetta stated they are working on it and will review and bring back to the October 3, 2022 meeting.

RESOLUTION #98

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt approving the minutes of August 8, 2022 as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

ASSESSOR REPORT:

Assessor's Report to Walton Town Board September 2022

- Ongoing Work: exemption processing, property review and data collection, updating property records and assessments, monitoring real estate listings, verifying property sales values, returning phone calls and emails, reviewing Real Property Tax Law, legislation, court cases and legal opinions.
- Preparation for 3 small claims cases.
- DEC Proposes Improvements to State's Forest Tax Law Program- page 2 DRAFT Response for public comment: While the DEC may want to provide more flexibility, require fewer plan updates, and extend the time period of an approved forest plan, I think that reporting requirements to assessors should be tightened, so that it is clearly documented from the landowner each year that the commitment to perform forestry work is being completed to ensure eligibility for the 480a Forest Exemption each year. Currently the minimal reporting requirements for the forest exemption are not even as stringent as the yearly income and renewals required of senior citizens exemptions. And in most cases the forest exemption is of far greater value. Assessors currently document eligibility for agricultural exemptions: income, leases and other eligibility status, yearly as well as senior exemptions. The paperwork for the DEC to violate an exemption is cumbersome at best at a 10-year plan. To extend the forestry work time period to 15 or 20 years, so that violation calculations are subject to information dating back 15-20 years seems a move in the wrong direction. Currently the paperwork and process to violate a 5- or 10- year plan on a non-compliant property is so difficult according to the DEC that deadlines are extended and properties that aren't complying with their requirements continue to receive the forest exemption benefit sometimes for years and years. If the assessor were more closely involved in the approval process, with not just an annual commitment document provided to them, as is currently required, but with actual substantive documentary proof of forestry work being completed such as harvests, thinning, boundary painting etc.... the exemption could be removed from the non-compliant properties on a timelier basis, at a savings to DEC time and work hours and also saving taxpayer dollars for those other

taxpayers making up the burden of the lost tax revenue (typically 80% of the forest land assessment) for a non-compliant forest property.

- Property Owner Hotline Numbers

Star Credit: 518-457-2036
Homeowner Property Tax Rebate Check: 518-453-8146

- Resources and records online:
 - o Department of Taxation and Finance Municipal Profiles
<http://orps1.orpts.ny.gov/cfapps/MuniPro/>
 - o Delaware County Real Property Tax Services
<http://www.co.delaware.ny.us/departments/tax/tax.htm>

Supervisor Cetta commented on the Assessor’s report, and thanked Danny Hodges for going above and beyond with helping Penny as she was preparing for the small claims hearing.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

Town of Walton
Code Enforcement Office
Jonathan R Henderson

Monthly Summary Report
Month of August 2022

Building Permits Issued	3
Building Inspections Completed	32
Fire Inspections Completed	0
Notices of Violation Issued	0
Tickets Issued	0
Certificates Issued	7
Complaints Received	0
Floodplain Development	
Permits Issued	0
CO Searches	1

DOG CONTROL REPORT:

Martin J. Way, Jr. Dog Control Officer
Town of Walton
129 North Street
Walton, New York 13856
August 2022 Dog Control Activity Summary

Complaints	3
Dogs Seized	0
Returned to Owner	0
Humane Society	0
Dangerous Dog Cases	
Assistance	
Tickets Issued	8
Total Redemption Fees	\$ 0.00
Mileage	3 Miles

FEMA COORDINATOR:

TOWN OF WALTON
FEMA COORDINATOR REPORT
September 12, 2022

Project #83441, PW#00265, “Woodlawn Road Integral Support Failure”, has been obligated.

On August 31st the exit briefing was conducted with FEMA.

There are a few more steps to the process: All unfinished projects need completion before the October 1, 2022 deadline, a bit of paperwork, Homeland Security and FEMA review of large project, document and submit the Direct Administrative Costs (DAC) to manage event for review and approval, receive outstanding payments, and then I hope we can consider this disaster closed

The Board thanked Walt for all the time he has put into the FEMA projects.

SUPERINTENDENT OF HWY. REPORT:

Reported they have all but two stream projects complete and plan to finish those in the coming weeks.

Reported that the roadside mowing has been completed and will now concentrate on brush and trees that are encroaching.

Reported that the part time laborer has been working on some overgrown cemeteries around town and making progress.

Reported that he is looking into spray foam insulation for the storage building walls, as well as blown in cellulose for the ceiling. He stated this will be more cost effective and currently waiting for a couple more quotes

TOWN CLERK’S REPORT:

Provided the financial reports to the Board

Reported that the dog enumeration has brought in 129 new dogs since the announcement of the enumeration. Although the official enumeration has ended, the Dog Control Officer now will do follow up visits and any dog owner with an unlicensed dog over 4 months of age, could face a \$25.00 court fine.

Attorney Walas has provided a draft law to increase the late dog renewal fee. I would like to put this on hold due to software concerns and bring back next month.

RESOLUTION #99

USE OF FACILITY

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt granting the St. John the Baptist Church use of Veterans Plaza on October 15, 2022 for the purpose of prayer rally. All in favor, motion carried.

SUPERVISOR’S REPORT:

Supervisor Cetta read a letter from the Walton Town Judge Michael Ripa, requesting permission to apply for a \$30,000 Justice Court Assistance Program Grant. Judge Ripa would like to install a duress alarm system, courtroom benches and a Ductless AC Mini-split unit for the Courtroom.

RESOLUTION #100

APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR JUSTICE COURT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to authorized Justice Michael Ripa to apply for a \$30,000 Justice Court Assistance Program Grant on behalf of the Town of Walton. All in favor, motion carried.

Supervisor Cetta provided an update concerning the generator to be purchased with ARPA Funds for the First Baptist Church in order to become an American Red Cross evacuation and emergency center. He informed the Board that a meeting with the American Red Cross and the church deacons was successful and just need to work out the details. The Board discussed how the funds should be disbursed. They have referred this to Attorney Walas to research. Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt suggested setting parameters to be sure the money is spent properly and to assure the site will stay as an American Red Cross evacuation and emergency center.

Supervisor Cetta was approached by the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce and the Village of Walton seeking a letter of support for a grant they would like to apply for. He stated he will set up a meeting with the Mayor to gather more information first.

Supervisor Cetta introduced Local Law #3 of 2022 a Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal Law §3-C. Adopting said local law is not predictive of the final tax levy but will provide the Walton Town Board flexibility to exceed the Property Tax Cap if it is deemed necessary, and to ensure that any State recalculation of the applicable limit will not make the Town inadvertently out of compliance.

RESOLUTION #101

PUBLIC HEARING FOR LOCAL LAW #3 OF 2022

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to approve holding a Public Hearing on October 3, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. for persons wishing to speak in favor or against proposed Local Law #3 of 2022, A Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal law §3-C. All in favor, motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORT:

Supervisor Cetta provided the Board with an update on the Veterans Plaza sidewalk. He stated the Girl Scout Troop has prepared the flower bed and mulch and will plant the bulbs in October.

Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt commented that it is nice to see all the activity going on at the Plaza.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

RESOLUTION #102

APPROVAL OF BILLS

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

General Fund A	#151-193	\$23,232.62
General OV B	#10-	\$125.01
General Hwy DA	#72-76	\$1,904.71
OV HWY DB	#30-35	\$242,146.11

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

RESOLUTION #103

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussion the potential hire of a particular person. All in favor, motion carried.

The Board invited Superintendent Offnick into executive session.

Entered 6:30 p.m.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronda Williams
Town Clerk