

TOWN BOARD MEETING

June 12, 2023

6:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sharon and Rusty Way, Beth and Kevin O'Brian, Tracy Williams, Walt Geidel, GG Stankiewicz, Toni Leslie Stankiewicz, Kathleen Hayek, Ted Hayek, Rachael Kadish and Lillian Browne-Burdick – The Reporter

FLOOR TIME:

Caren Shapiro and Jay Furman had privilege of the floor to request Marvin Hollow Road be changed to Furman Road. This request comes from Mr. Furman's lineage as his family was one of the founding fathers that came to Walton in 1785.

The Board was not sure of the procedure and stated they will look into it and follow up. The Board suggested obtaining a petition from the other residents on the road as well.

Kathleen Hayek approached the Board and thanked them for meeting with her last month and is now inquiring as to whether or not they would approve the proposed Pride Month or stay with the Equality Month.

Mrs. Hayek read a letter from Christian Vitek, who was not in attendance, but whom she stated was the author and individual who was in charge of the Young Progressives and a strong supporter of the movement.

Toni Leslie Stankiewicz spoke in support of a Pride Month Proclamation stating as being a resident for 15 years in Walton and identifies as the "T" in LGBTQ.

GG Stankiewicz of Delhi, NY spoke in support of a Pride Month Proclamation.

Rachael Kadish approached the Board questioning what a proclamation would mean in practice. Councilwoman Wood stated it would be placed in the minutes and assumably in the Reporter.

Supervisor Cetta decided to move up the discussion from his report to now on which proclamation the Board would prefer, the previously approved or the proposed.

Supervisor Cetta stated he received three emails in favor of a Pride Month proclamation, but numerous individuals approached him in support of last year's Equality Proclamation.

Councilwoman Wood stated she received the same feedback and mentioned that a proclamation does not make people like you more and that she hoped the future would be more accepting.

Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt stated his life experience and felt the movement has gotten to the point that people are trying to normalize certain psychiatric conditions and feels this creates further problems. “We go from one extreme to another.”

He felt the prior proclamation is encompassing for all and is against anyone that attacks someone for their sexuality.

Councilman Govern stated no one is in favor of any kind of discrimination.

He pointed out the “+” in LGBTQ+, questioning how many genders are you going to have?

Kathleen Hayek stated she was talking equity and not equality. Councilman Rodriguez-Betancourt stated we are talking equality and questioned is there something that the LGBTQ can’t do? There was not a response to this question.

### **EQUALITY MONTH PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Walton recognizes and proclaims the month of June 2023 as “Equality Month” throughout the Town of Walton; and

WHEREAS, all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Walton is committed to supporting visibility, dignity and equality for all people in our diverse community; and

WHEREAS, this nation was founded on the principle that every individual has infinite dignity and worth, and the Town of Walton calls upon the people of this municipality to embrace this principle and work to eliminate prejudice everywhere it exists; and

WHEREAS, celebrating Equality Month influences awareness and provides support and advocacy for the inclusion of all members of the community, and is an opportunity to take action and engage in dialogue to strengthen alliances, build acceptance and advance equal rights.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Town of Walton hereby proclaims the month of June 2023 as Equality Month.

**RESOLUTION#62**

### **EQUALITY PROCLAMATION FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2023**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wood, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt approving June 2023 as Equality Month in the Town of Walton. All in favor, motion carried.

**RESOLUTION #63**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Councilman Govern seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt approving the minutes of May 8, 2023 as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

**ASSESSOR REPORT:**

**June 2023**

**Assessor's Report to Walton Town Board**

This is a longer than usual report, being the first one filed since March. It's been a busy time. There was quite a bit of extra workload for assessors with extra exemptions and paperwork this year leading up to the May 1 filing of the tentative roll with the law requiring a second-notice postcard mailing for seniors letting them know about the senior partial exemption. There were calculations to do as well about income levels and the law changes to the senior exemption in all three of the County, Town and Village this year. There have been a few technology issues as well, detailed below, also Grievance Day to take care of.

**Technology:**

**Photos:** A couple of months ago I stopped being able to upload photos to the property records. This causes problems when valuing properties and keeping track of assessments that need to be changed. Delaware County IT and Nancy Stulligross are aware of the problem and have been communicating with me about it to get it fixed. There had been a problem in late 2021 which was resolve in 2022 which has resurfaced where older photos have 'disappeared' from the records, and recently this year it has become impossible to upload any photos at all. Thankfully the photos pre-existing 2021 are fine...for now.

**Aerial Photos:** I've also been communicating with IT and Eagle View to determine why certain areas of the aerial photo program I use are blocked out. With Ronda, Spectrum and ISD Matt Ross, we determined it is not a Walton local problem: not the modem or our internet connection or computers. It is more widespread than that. Today Eagle View gave me a workaround which I will be testing out to see if it clears up the problem. And they are looking into how to resolve it on their end.

**Sales** are continuing at a slower pace than last year. The local Multiple Listing Service for Otsego, Delaware, Chenango and Broome counties has gone to a new website: NYS Alliance of MLS. I just found this out yesterday, and am working to gain access and be able to see all of Walton's current real estate listings.

**Grievance Day** was quiet with no one coming in, but the Board of Assessment Review still had to make made decisions on 11 properties, and complete the forms and letters accompanying them. Three grievances were filed but not heard due to lack of information provided on the complaint form. The BAR does a very nice job being aware of the routines, market values, and laws regarding assessment and the complaint process. The solar project will likely still need to be valued according to the recent law change back to mandating assessors use the state model of valuation. However, the former value still appears on the assessment roll and no grievance was filed regarding that value. 581-a values are still being discussed for Mountainview and Walton Housing projects to determine their assessments for this tax year.

**New Taxable Values:** The 2023 added taxable value estimates for the School, Town and Village are shown below. Also, the decrease in County taxable value due to the increase in Senior exemption levels is shown.

Taxable Value*	Final Roll 2022	Tentative Roll 2023	Change
School**	378,175,218	378,986,108	810,890
Town	373,936,581	374,904,145	967,564
County	377,356,121	376,513,664	-842,457 ***
Village	132,725,971	132,724,565	-1,406
*changes to these amounts may be made due to correction of errors and court-ordered settlements			
**values before STAR exemptions			
<b>County Senior Exemption***</b>	<b>exempt value</b>	<b>exempt value</b>	
	579,234	2,316,881	1,737,647
***The drop in County taxable value may be due to increased senior exemption values			

**Schedule change request:** With Board approval, I would like to request to please change my Friday office hours 8am-12pm to Monday office hours 8am-12pm. Monday hours will still allow me to work a day that if out of town residents would like to come in to the office to see me, they will still have that opportunity on Monday mornings. Because of my scheduling on other days this would be a permanent change. The switch from Friday office hours to Monday office hours would take effect July 10<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you.  
 Penny S. Haddad  
 Respectfully submitted  
 June 9, 2023

Supervisor Cetta informed the Board that the current equalization rate is down to 77%. Discussion took place as to what will be need to get us back to 100%. The Board requested the Assessor put a packet together as to what is needed to complete this.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Town of Walton  
 Code Enforcement Office  
 Jonathan R. Henderson

**Monthly Summary Report**  
 Month of May 2023

Building Permits Issued	12
Building Inspections Completed	36
Fire Inspections Completed	0
Notices of Violation Issued	0
Tickets Issued	0
Certificates Issued	6
Complaints Received	1

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  
 May 2023  
 Dog Control Activity Summary

Complaints	6
Dogs Seized	1
Returned to Owner	0
Humane Society	1
Dangerous Dogs	0
Tickets Issued	9
Total Redemption Fees	\$0.00
Assistance, Police	2
 Mileage	 52 Miles

FEMA COORDINATOR:

Reported no update

SUPERINTENDENT OF HWY. REPORT:

Reported that he had received three quotes for a new flatbed to be placed on the new Ram 5500 truck.

- Crever’s Welding & Fabrication \$3,200/\$700 - wood deck
- Charles D. Stahl Sales and Service \$6,199.99/\$1,500 – wood deck
- OverKill \$6,800 – steel deck and power coated.

He recommended approving Crever’s Welding & Fabrication in the amount of \$3,200 and the department would install.

**RESOLUTION #64**

**PURCHASE FLATBED FOR RAM 5500**

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Govern to accept the quote from Crever’s Welding & Fabrication for a wood deck flatbed in the amount of \$3,200. All in favor, motion carried.

Reported the department has prepared the roads for the grader patch, paving and sealing operations.

Reported the department has mostly been doing ditch and shoulder work as well as mowing along the roads.

Reported that he plans to have Northern Crushing process the millings pile for use in the paving operations.

TOWN CLERK’S REPORT:

Provided Financial Reports

I presented a resolution that has been generated from the Town of Huntington to ask legislation to require voter identification.

**RESOLUTION #65**

**RESOLUTION URGING THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL TO DRAFT AND ENACT LEGISLATION REGARDING A VOTER’S IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

The following resolution was offered by: Councilman Govern

And seconded by: Rodriguez-Betancourt

**WHEREAS**, this country was formed on the principles of democracy and our forefathers fought for our right to elect our representation; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of the states in the U.S. require a voter’s identification to increase the public’s confidence and ensure a fair election process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Elections may not get notification of a voter registering in another location or of a death of a registered voter; and

**WHEREAS**, in an economy where the Board of Elections may not have sufficient funding or staffing to purge voters rolls of individuals who no longer live in each election district or county, as required; and

**WHEREAS**, in a day and age where the ability to work does not necessarily need to be where you live, this allows for more individuals to be transient in nature and the addition of voter’s identification will assist in keeping all voter rolls current; and

**WHEREAS**, in the State of New York the requirement is to compare the signature on file, this doesn’t necessarily help maintain current voter registration, as name and address changes are not necessarily communicated in the current process, also this would assist in the purging of the roles of individuals who are no longer active voters in that county; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject of the resolution is not an action as defined by 6 N.Y.C.R.R. §617.2 (b), and therefore no further SEQRA review is required.

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

**THE WALTON TOWN BOARD**

**HEREBY REQUESTS** the New York State Legislature and Governor Hochul to draft and enact legislation to allow for a voter’s identification process to assist with maintaining voter’s registration rolls; and

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Clerk is hereby directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to Governor Hochul, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, President Pro Tempore and Majority Leader, Carl E. Heastie, Speaker of the Assembly and the Walton Delegation to the New York State Legislature: Assemblyman Christopher Tague, Assemblyman Joe Angelino, Assemblyman Brian Maher and Senator Peter Oberacker.

Vote:	Ayes:	Noes:	Abstentions:
Councilperson Armstrong	x		

Councilperson Govern	x
Councilperson Rodriguez-Betancourt	x
Councilperson Wood	x
Supervisor Cetta	x

The Resolution was thereupon Declared approved.

I presented the following bid results.

Generator Bid – no bidders

We had the Riverwalk Bid opening on May 31, 2023 that brought two bidders.

LaFever Excavating - \$27.25

Tweedie Construction \$37.10

**RESOLUTION #66**

**RIVERWALK BID AWARD**

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Rodriguez-Betancourt to accept the responsible low bidder LaFever Excavating in the amount of \$27.25 per linear foot to install a walking trail along the river and 21 Water Street on the Village of Walton’s property. All in favor, motion carried.

**SUPERVISOR’S REPORT:**

Reported the Justice Department went out for quotes on courtroom furniture that will be purchased from the awarded justice grant.

AGATI \$23,787.72

Sauder Courtroom Furniture \$3,518.70

**RESOLUTION #67**

**ACCEPT COURT BENCH QUOTE**

A motion was made by Councilman Govern, seconded by Wood to accept the quote from Sauder Courtroom Furniture in the amount of \$3,518.70 for court benches to be funded by the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court Fund Grant. All in favor, motion carried.

***RESOLUTION# 68***  
**COMMUNITY RECREATION GRANT**

**WHEREAS**, the Community of Walton has identified a need for the development of a park, boat ramp, and recreation trail project within the Village of Walton; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Walton and the Town of Walton have agreed to work together to create a community waterfront park on properties owned by both municipalities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village has contracted with the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District to complete a flood plain reclamation project which has created a large open space between the Village Center and the West Branch of the Delaware River; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Walton and Town of Walton have worked together to complete a flood mitigation master plan which resulted in a conceptual development plan for the creation of outdoor recreation parks within the Village; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village has identified an appropriate funding opportunity and intends to apply for funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the project will create a more enjoyable, sustainable, and walkable community and result in a safer and healthier community; and

**WHEREAS**, the project will require grant funding in order to bring the project to fruition; and

**WHEREAS**, applications are being accepted by way of the Consolidated Funding Application through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; and

**WHEREAS**, as a requirement of these programs, said municipality must obtain the approval/endorsement of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be located.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of Walton does hereby approve and endorse the submission of applications for grants for a park, boat ramp, and recreation trails, and associated amenities within the Village of Walton, Delaware County, New York.

**RESOLUTION # 68**

**COMMUNITY RECREATION GRANT**

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Wood to approve a Consolidated Funding Application grant under the Environmental Protection Fund and the Recreational Trails Program with the Village of Walton for a park, boat ramp, and recreation trail. All in favor, motion carried.

Discussion took place concerning the 2023-24 Recreation Agreement between the Village and Town of Walton. Councilman Govern questioned the pool hours and whether or not swimming lessons would be offered? Supervisor Cetta stated he spoke with the Recreation Leader and they are working on a plan as there were concerns over the availability of lifeguards and their pay. The Board asked for a detail accounting of the recreation program from the Village be provided for future evaluation.

**RESOLUTION #69**

**RECREATION CONTRACT AGREEMENT 2023-24**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wood, seconded by Govern to approve the Recreation Agreement between the Village and Town of Walton for 2023. Ayes: Armstrong, Govern, Wood, Cetta, Noes: Rodriguez-Betancourt. Approved.



**RESOLUTION #70**

**ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

A motion was made by Councilman Govern, seconded by Wood, to accept the resignation of Code Enforcement Officer Jonathon Henderson effective July 12, 2023. All in favor, motion carried.

Supervisor Cetta reported he had attended the Tiberio meeting held at the School House in Downsville. He also informed the Board of the Public Hearing that will be held by the Economic Development on June 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of hearing of a proposed project and financial assistance relating to a processing facility to be located at 177 Industrial Park Road.

Supervisor Cetta stated he has not had luck in obtaining an organization to head an ATV Club in Walton. After discussion, it was decided to have Attorney Walas look into the legality of home rule and allowing ATVs over 1000 lbs. to ride along town roads.

Reported that the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) will be here from July 11<sup>th</sup> – July 19, 2023 offering basic healthcare and veterinary services to the public during a no-cost walk-in event to be held at the Walton High School.

**COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Councilwoman Wood stated she spoke with Meagan Freeman concerning the Farmer’s Market to be held on Fridays. The Cornell Cooperative Extension has pulled out stating lack of vendor interest. The Walton Chamber of Commerce is looking into taking over the event.

Councilwoman Wood informed the Board that student working on an eagle badge may be interested in building a kiosk for Veterans Plaza. She will follow up and keep the Board apprised.

Councilwoman questioned Supervisor Cetta if Delaware County did a State of Emergency on the relocation of immigrants to Delaware County? Supervisor Cetta stated he believed they have. Councilwoman question whether or not it had to be renewed every 30 day or every 5 days? Supervisor Cetta stated he would look into this and report back.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

**RESOLUTION #71**

**APPROVAL OF BILLS**

A motion was made by Councilman Govern seconded by Wood approving the vouchers as presented for payment. All in favor, motion carried.

General Fund A	#77-93	\$9,776.71
General OV B	#8-11	\$32,891.67
General HWY DA	#48-52	\$5,868.70
OV HWY DB	#11-16	\$24,533.99

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

**RESOLUTION #72**

**ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Councilman Armstrong, seconded by Govern to enter into executive session for a matter relating to a particular employee. All in favor, motion carried.

Entered 7:55

Closed executive session at 8:15

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronda Williams  
Town Clerk