

PLYMOUTH TOWN BOARD MEETING

APRIL 8, 2024

6:30PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Patricia Murray
Councilman Ray Elsworth
Councilman Robert Oehme
Councilman Kathryn Clemens
Highway Superintendent Louis Redenback

ABSENT: Councilman Frank Williams

Supervisor Patricia Murray brought the meeting to order at 6:30pm. She led in the Pledge to the Flag.

She asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of March 11 and March 18, 2024. There were none. Mr. Elsworth made a motion to approve the minutes as sent. Mrs. Clemens seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with four yeases and no nos. Mr. Williams was absent.

Ms. Murray introduced the Town's bookkeeper, Mrs. Ray. She informed everyone that all the money was returned to the Town from the fraud incident involving Town bank accounts. She said there was still an investigation going on by the FBI and Homeland Security. She also explained how the money in the highway fund was used at the end of 2023. She said that there were \$213,000.00 outstanding checks that had been issued by the previous administration. That left \$60,000.00

which was not as much as everyone thought. The General Fund also had outstanding checks, but not as many. They amounted to about \$17,000.00.

Mrs. Ray also said that she had an extension to file the Annual Financial Report with the State. Once that was done, Mrs. Murray would give the public an overview of the report.

Mrs. Ray also said she had gone through the payroll figures for the end of the year and found no problem. She could not find a reason for the use of budget lines that the former bookkeeper used for this expense.

Mrs. Ray explained that money in certain reserve accounts that were set aside for specific uses could not, by law, be used for other expenses.

Ms. Murray said the money could be used if the Town went through the NY State Legislature for approval. The process takes up to a year.

Mrs. Ray read an explanation handed down from the State about the Tax Cap. In the event that the local government's actual tax levy for a given fiscal year exceeds the tax levy limit, as established pursuant to this section due to clerical or technical error the local government shall place the excess amount of the levy in reserve. In accordance with such requirements as the State comptroller may prescribe. Mrs. Ray said she opened an account and moved \$298,000.00 into this account. It will be applied to the 2025 Budget. She recommended an amendment to the budget to decrease the property taxes by \$298,000.00. Which means in order to balance the budget, expenses would have to be reduced by \$298,000.00.

Mrs. Ray said she and Mrs. Murray are working on tightening up the billing audit process.

Questions and answers followed. Mr. Wightman asked for a copy of the extension request that the bookkeeper submitted to the State for the Annual Financial Report. She did not have it with her, but she would get a copy to him.

Mrs. Brown read a letter of resignation from Sandy Pierce from the Planning Board.

Mrs. Brown also read a letter of resignation from Councilman Frank Williams.

Mr. Elsworth made a motion to accept these resignations. Mrs. Clemens seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with four yeases and no nos. One Councilman's seat was vacant. Ms. Murray thanked both Mrs. Pierce and Mr. Williams for their many years of service. She also announced that she was going to appoint Cathy Clemens as Deputy Town Supervisor.

DOG CONTROL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Brian Franklin reported on the following:

- 3/16/24 – Dog on neighbor's property. Ticket given.
- 3/30/24 – Route 21 dog welfare
- 4/2/24 – Inman Road - dog on neighbor's property
- 4/8/24 – Travis Road – dog on neighbor's property
- 4/8/24 – Center Road – dog on neighbor's property

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Steve Fox reported on the following:

- Court appearance for Josh Kisner. Josh was a no show. The Judge will send him a letter to appear in April.

- Spoke with John Buffa about all the clutter on his property on County Rd. 16. He claims he is unable to do anything himself due to his health. He will try to find some help.
- Site visit to Lawrence Hutchinson's junk yard on County Rd. 21. The curtains on the fence have blown down. He has ordered some different type of fasteners and will get it back up.
- Call from Keith Row about Travis Rd. He is concerned about the septic repair that was done on the Cody Spaven property a few months ago. Did a site visit after his first complaint and found that the septic had been repaired. I did another visit last week and didn't see any problems or any seepage. I called Keith back and told him I will keep an eye on it.
- Site visit to Cliff Ketchum's property on County Rd. 19 and Ingram Rd. a lot of tires and some junk. Spoke with Cliff. He said its not his fault. People dump tires there and the Sheriff won't help him. I told him he needs to clean up the tires and maybe put up some cameras.
- Complaint about junk cars at 1378 Center Rd. Working on making contact with the owner, Dyrick Clemens.
- Site visit to the camper site of Chris Brazee on Tinker Ridge. Was unable to make contact with anyone and did not see any septic on the ground.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Louis Redenback gave the following report:

- Sanded and plowed 6 times.

- Completed the project on Daniels Rd.
- Finished the FEMA project on Ashcraft Rd. that Rodney didn't finish.
- Cleaned ditches on Bates Wilson, Tinker Ridge, and Adams along with changing some culverts.
- Started to change a large culvert on Pigeon Hill Rd.
- Have picked up the new trailer and have been using it.
- Turned in 10 bills for the highway for a total of \$37,470.33 and 6 bills for general for a total of \$2841.91.

Mrs. Clemens asked about the timing for the reimbursements for State projects. She asked if he had applied for CHIPS funding. ~~He said yes.~~ ^{Not yet} She asked him if he had any allowable expenses for Pave NY, EWR and POP. He said some of them he did and some he did not. Extreme Winter Recovery is doubtful since the winter has been very mild. He expects to get the full amount for CHIPS. The other funds will be higher than the amounts that were originally allocated because some of them will be rolled over.

She asked about the 284 Highway agreement. He said it was hard to make a plan like that when the available money was in question. She also asked about the inventory. He said it was done. She asked that longevity be included in the inventory report. She also asked if a price comparison was done when renting equipment. He said he would love to buy equipment instead of rent, but the budget was a constraint. Ms. Murray asked for a copy of the inventory for everyone on the Board. She also asked for copies of the folders on each truck.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Mr. Manwarren gave the following report:

- Accepted the resignation of Mrs. Sandy Pierce.
- Received a letter from Mrs. Rachelle Ciborowski asking to join the Planning Board. After some discussion, the Board voted to accept Mrs. Ciborowski as a new member with the approval of the Town Board. Her term will expire on 12/31/27.
- Will meet with Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Shane Butler, at the Chenango County Planning Dept., to get some guidance on a comprehensive plan development and survey.
- Mr. Manwarren was informed about the Clean Energy Communities Program by the County Planning Dept. He contacted Cornell University about that and was told that Ms. Murray had already been in touch with them. Mr. Manwarren said the Planning Board was not advised about that and he assumed that Ms. Murray would apprise the Planning Board about it soon.
- Mrs. Clemens and Mr. Manwarren had had some discussion about a grant for Foster Park and possibly a playground.
- Ms. Fairbanks created a draft for a new Planning Board Decision Form and with the Board's approval, they would like to start using it.

Ms. Murray said she did speak with the Clean Energy Communities Program about grants, and was concerned because the Town has to put the money up front.

Mr. Elsworth made a motion approving the appointment of Rachelle Ciborowski as Planning Board member whose term will expire on

12/31/2027. Mr. Oehme seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with four yeases and no nos. One Councilman's seat was vacant.

JOINT YOUTH PROJECT REPORT: Mrs. Linda Powell-Owens reported on the recent Easter Egg Hunt. She complained about the difficult time she had working with the other volunteers. She said the hunt itself was "bedlam" as it did not go according to her plan. She said at that time there was no Joint Youth Project Committee.

Mrs. Shelly Ciborowski started a rebuttal but was asked to wait until Public Concerns.

Ms. Murray announced that Mr. Oehme will replace Mr. Williams on the Code of Ethics Board. Mrs. Clemens made a motion to approve of this appointment. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was carried with four yeases and no nos. One Councilman seat was vacant.

Mrs. Clemens read Resolution #17 2024 which directed a new method for processing bills. The Town Clerk objected to the process because the Resolution directed that an abstract be created before the bills were approved by the Board. She said the abstract cannot be created until the Board members have approved the bills to be paid. There was more discussion. Ms. Murray decided to table this Resolution.

Mr. Oehme read Resolution #18 Authorizing Kathryn J. Clemens to be the Second Signature for NBT Bank National Association Accounts and Checks. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and

the Resolution was passed with three yeases and no nos. Mrs. Clemens abstained and one Councilman seat was vacant.

Mrs. Clemens read Resolution 19 2024 to Amend the 2024 Town General Fund Budget. She also read a Resolution to amend the 2024 Town Highway Fund Budget. Mr. Oehme seconded the Resolutions. The Board was polled and the Resolutions were passed with four yeases and no nos. One Councilman seat was vacant.

Town Clerk Virginia Brown publicly took responsibility for the error in publishing the Tax Cap Meeting. She apologized.

Ms. Murray let everyone know about the leak that threatened the records in the Records Room. It has been repaired.

She reported that the Town is still waiting on the audit and Mr. Oakley's case is still on hold.

Spectrum installed a new modem.

Mrs. Clemens informed everyone that she would like to hear from people about the newsletter. She would like to have the first letter completed by the first week of May. Area on Aging will help with getting the letter out. Mrs. Clemens will make a PDF available and the letter will also be posted on the website.

Mrs. Brown brought attention to the chart she had distributed to everyone showing the website usage. It had increased by 18% since the beginning.

The Facebook page that several people were interested in was discouraged by Mrs. Clemens and Ms. Murray because it would have to

be linked to an individual. They did not want to link it to a person. Ms. Murray said she would look into it further.

Ms. Murray said the SPCA contract had been signed and filed in the Town Clerk's office.

She asked Mr. Redenback if he was happy with the new trailer the Town purchased on March 18, 2024. He said yes.

Ms. Murray asked Mr. Redenback if he had any idea when he could get to the Foster Park project. He said he didn't know.

The City Youth Contract was delivered and paid for. It was also published in the newspaper.

Ms. Murray said she contacted the Association of Towns concerning the use of the Town dumpster by the public. They said the Highway Superintendent did not have the authority to allow that. It was also brought up at the last meeting that it might be theft of services. Mr. Redenback said he was informed that it was not a theft of services. They advised if the Town wanted to allow the highway employees to use the dumpster, it should be put in their next Union contract.

Ms. Murray received a letter from the Town of Preston to notify the Town of their intension to apply to get services from Spectrum.

Mr. Redenback talked about the roads. He said that certain projects for which the Town had received funds from FEMA and other initiatives that were supposed to be done last year were not completed. They must be done or money will have to be paid back. The Town does not have the money. Therefore, the highway crew must finish those projects which will take away from the attention the roads need.

Ms. Murray asked those that donated money to the Joint Youth Program towards Dinner with Santa if they had any problem with the

Town keeping any remaining funds in that account after the event was paid for. Everyone said they had no problem. The amount was \$225.00.

Ms. Murray announced that she had a signup sheet available to anyone who wanted to be considered to fill the vacant Town Council seat.

PUBLIC CONCERNS: Waneta Kossman complained about the neighbor's chickens coming on her property. They make messes and destroy her flowers and plants. She was directed by the Sherriff's Department to go to the Town Board. She said the problem has been going on for a year.

Mr. Brett Wightman asked about when mandatory training would be done by Board members. He stated that the meeting to approve the purchase of the trailer for the Highway Department was not properly advertised. He also questioned the meeting when the Board went into Executive session to discuss a personnel matter. He said that there must be minutes taken if there is a vote during that Executive session. He wanted to know when the two people the Board chose were contacted and when they accepted. He also stated that when the Board goes into Executive session, they must state why they are doing that. The reason must be specific.

Ms. Rhonda Fairbanks asked if there had been any more developments on the ATV issue. She also said she thinks the gate should come down at Foster Park. She wanted to know if the spec sheet for the repair of the roof was ready. She wanted to know if the grant for the salt shed had been started. She expressed her feelings on the Easter Egg Hunt.

She said the hunt itself was horrible, but the activities inside the building were fantastic. She said all three entities of our town should be working together. She asked if Mr. Fox had followed up on Kelly Cushman's house. She also suggested that as the Town comes together, there should be fund raisers done.

Mr. Gary Simpson asked about the COVID money that the previous administration had given the Fire Department for equipment. He asked if the Town had gotten the receipts for those expenditures. Ms. Murray said she had just gotten them. She will let the public know about them at the next meeting.

Tim Manwarren suggested that the Town look at the Town of Guilford's procedures for their meetings. He would like to see the agendas, the financial statements, and the proposed resolutions put on the website.

Shelly Ciborowski expressed her feelings about the Easter Egg Hunt. She was very dissatisfied with the general attitude toward this event by Mrs. Powell-Owens and Ms. Murray. Mrs. Ciborowski thought the event went very well until the Easter Egg Hunt went outside. It was very unorganized. She said the Town needs a Joint Youth Project Committee. Mrs. Ciborowski was concerned about the fact that there was only one grand prize for several different age groups.

The Foster Park project was tabled at the last meeting because there was a question about prevailing wage. Ms. Murray contacted NY Roofers and they said they would be paying prevailing wage. Their

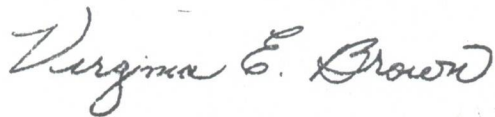
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quote was \$8,391.00 including labor. Mr. Wightman asked if anyone had checked out NY Roofers to see if their employees were in this country legally. There were several questions about the project.

The Board reviewed and signed the bills. Mr. Elsworth made a motion to pay the bills. Mr. Oehme seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with four yeses and no nos. One Councilman seat was vacant.

Mr. Oehme made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Clemens seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the meeting was adjourned at 10:10pm.

Respectfully submitted by,



Virginia E. Brown
Plymouth Town Clerk
April 25, 2024