

PLYMOUTH TOWN BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 10, 2023

6:30PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Patricia Murray
Councilman Frank Williams
Councilman Shawn Cushman
Highway Superintendent Louis Redenback

ABSENT: Councilman Daniel Meyer
Councilman Garry James

Supervisor Murray led in the Pledge to the Flag.

She asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the September Board Meeting. She had informed Mrs. Brown of a couple of corrections that needed to be made before the meeting, but no one else had any to add. Mr. Williams made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Mr. Cushman seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

DOG CONTROLL OFFICERS REPORT: Mr. Brian Franklin reported on the following:

- 9/19/23 Dog on neighbor's property
- 9/22/23 Issued a ticket to the dog's owner
- 9/23/23 Picked up a dog on Rt. 16 and took it to the SPCA

- 9/30/23 Dog missing on Deming Road – Could not find it.

Mr. Franklin told the Board that he would like to purchase an Onex App. This would help him in locating residences. It would cost \$30.00 per year. Mr. Williams made a motion to approve Mr. Franklin's purchase of this App. Mr. Cushman seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

Mrs. Brown read a letter of resignation from Mr. Brett Wightman as Deputy Highway Superintendent. Mr. Williams made a motion to accept Mr. Wightman's resignation. Mr. Cushman seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent. Ms. Murray thanked Mr. Wightman for all he had done for the Town.

Mr. Williams read a resolution to appoint Mr. Louis Redenback to the position of Superintendent of Highway. Mr. Cushman seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

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

- Follow up visit on Jackson Rd. Wade Moore has a couple of vehicles around unregistered, a lot of animals, no one around, left a card for the owner to call.

- Site visit on Plymouth-N. Norwich Rd. Quinton Kemp has 3 unregistered vehicles and some garbage, spoke with the owner. He will work on cleaning it up.
- Received a call about a well going in on Clymer Court. Did a visit. No one around. Did contact the owner who said he had plans to put in a septic system, he just had not found anyone to do it yet.
- Sent an Order to Remedy to Josh Kisner, owner of the apartment house on Plymouth-N. Norwich Rd. (with permission from the County) for the garbage problem.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Chairman Tim Manwarren reported that with the acceptance of Mr. Jim Earing's resignation, the Planning Board held a vote and elected Mr. Manwarren as Chairman. There have been no new requests from residents for assistance or any new developments. They will continue to assess the needs to develop a comprehensive plan for the Town of Plymouth and will be comprising a survey to send out to all tax payers as an aid to develop this plan. He was asking for clarification on spending a portion of the reserve building fund which was previously developed to obtain a plot of land and build a new Town Barn. Taking into consideration the current financial situation in the Town, they are hoping to use some of the money to improve the existing building.

He urged the Board to impose a two year term on the Planning Board members. This would stagger the arrival and departure of it's members avoiding the terms expiring all at once. With Mr. Earing's resignation, the Planning Board now consists of six people which is not in compliance with the guidelines of 5 or 7 members. If allowed, the

Planning Board will expire the term of one Planning Board member at the end of 2023 which would place them in compliance with the guidelines.

Mr. Williams read the resolution, American Rescue Plan Resolution 2022. Mr. Cushman seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent. Ms. Fairbanks asked why the Town did not have Mr. Wightman do the work if he could do it cheaper. Ms. Murray said that at the time, Mr. Wightman was already employed by the Town, as Deputy Highway Superintendent, so it would be a conflict of interest to have him also do repair work.

Ms. Murray announced that October was breast cancer awareness month. She advised that anyone could go to the Chenango County Department of Health for more information.

She also told everyone that she would be leaving information for veterans out in the entrance to the Town Hall. Any veteran needing information or help can contact Chenango County.

THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Louis Redenback reported on the following:

- Cleaned ditches on Owens Rd. and turned some of it back to dirt.
- Worked on Pigeon Hill turning some of the worst sections back to dirt.
- Cleaned up more in the garage.

- With help from Mr. Wightman, they built a large shelf against the back wall.
- The bathroom is 90% done and is usable now.
- Hauling sand
- Still waiting to hear from the insurance company about the wrecked truck.
- Truck #1 still in the shop waiting until the Town can pay for the parts needed.
- Truck #7 sitting at Burt's waiting for an engine.
- The estimate from Suit-Kote for sealing Reservoir Rd. and Ashcraft Rd. is \$11,417.40. This must be done to protect the new paving that was just put down so the roads aren't lost this winter.

Mrs. Helen Manwarren asked why the Town Roads were in such bad repair.

Ms. Marge Hackett asked why the money used to black top the Reservoir Rd. was not split up amongst other roads. Mr. Redenback said the plans were already set for that project. Ms. Hackett asked about the paver that the Town has. Mr. Redenback said it was not usable because it was meant to pave driveways. Mr. Rodney Oakley bought that paver. Mr. Redenback said it had been decided to put the paver up for sale on Auctions International.

Ms. Hackett asked about the wrecked truck. Mr. Redenback said the Town has not heard from the insurance company yet.

Ms. Murray offered an explanation for the increase in the proposed budget for 2024. Erroneous practices by the previous administration have made it difficult to build a realistic budget for 2024. When asked about using money from the Town's Capital Reserve, Ms. Murray read a letter from the Town attorney saying that a Town may not borrow money from its own Capital Reserve. Ms. Murray said she also contacted the Association of Towns who agreed with the Town's attorney.

Several people from the audience asked that the bookkeeper attend a meeting so she could answer some of their questions. Ms. Murray said the bookkeeper does not want to come to a meeting.

The question was asked about where were the other Board members. Ms. Murray said Mr. James has not attended a meeting since April. Mr. Meyer has health issues. She said that the Board members that were there had been working hard to help her untangle the problems.

The CHIPS money has not been applied for yet. Ms. Murray asked Mr. Redenback for the financial estimates for the Highway side of the budget. She would like to have it in writing.

When asked, Ms. Murray said that auditors are still working on the Town's records.

Ms. Murray asked Mrs. Brown to hand out the tentative budget to the Board. She announced that the Board had had two Budget Workshops. She thanked Jerry Kreiner and Jackie Kreiner for their help.

Mr. Redenback advised everyone that not all roads would be getting work done next year because of money issues. When a road gets

extensive work done that qualifies for CHIPS money, that road is not eligible for more work for ten years.

Mr. Tim Manwarren asked if a person's road needed attention in 8 years, could any work be done on it. Mr. Redenback said work could be done on it, but CHIPS will not reimburse the Town for it.

Mr. Manwarren also asked how much was spent on paving this year.

Mr. Wightman said \$88,000.00.

Mr. Cushman made the motion to approve the tentative budget for 2024. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

Mr. Cushman made a Resolution to hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 6:00pm at the Town Hall. Mr. Williams seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

Ms. Murray said we will be going above the tax cap. The expected increase will be \$317.50 per \$50,000.00 assessed value. The County's taxes will also be going up.

Mrs. Bernadett Jackson implored the Board to be more aware of the expenditures put before them for approval so this situation does not happen again.

Mr. Mark Bennett asked if there would be any repercussions from the State because our Town is going over the tax cap. Ms. Murray said right now, we should still be able to get State aid.

Mr. Manwarren asked when the last time was when a reassessment was done. Mr. Gary Simpson said it was in the 90's. He said a reevaluation would cost \$1,000.00 per resident.

Mr. Tom Kreiner asked if the Town was still paying Mr. James. Mr. Wightman said Mr. James had violated the Town Code of Ethics so the Town should be able to stop paying him. Mr. Kreiner asked Ms. Murray to show the documents concerning this issue to the Town attorney and the County Attorney. Mr. Manwarren asked when Mr. James would get paid. Ms. Murray said he would get paid at the end of the year.

Mr. Wightman asked if the Highway crew were going to have their hours cut back to 30 hours per week. Ms. Murray said no.

Mr. Wightman asked Ms. Murray if there was a reason she was consulting with Mr. Rodney Oakley. Ms. Murray said he called her. She did not call him. She did not consult with him.

Mr. Kreiner asked why the Preliminary Budget cannot be made public. Ms. Murray will check that out. They will be published on the website if permissible.

Mr. Kreiner referred to the question about the \$400,000.00 in the Capital Reserve. He said that money was regulated by a Resolution passed in 1998. He urged everyone to accept things as they are and move forward.

Mr. Redenback explained what CHIPS money is. He said it is money the Town gets to reimburse them for qualifying jobs that were done. It is a reimbursement. He also let everyone know that no paving will be done next year.

Ms. Murray read minutes from two meetings last year where former Supervisor Grace Alger stated in one meeting that taxes were probably be going to have to be raised and in the next meeting (three days later) she said that she needed to give out raises because if the Town didn't use the money, it would loose it. Ms. Murray spoke with the Assistant County Treasurer and she said she had not indicated that to Mrs. Alger. Ms. Murray said those kinds of things have caused a lot of the Town's problems with the Budget. Ms. Murray said as soon as she gets the figures for the CHIPS application, she will go to the bank and apply for a Note of Anticipation of Revenue with the understanding that when that CHIPS check came in, the Note must be paid back.

There was a lot of discussion.

The next meeting will be on October 19, 2023 at 6:00pm.

The some of the bills were reviewed. Mr. Williams made a motion to pay the bills that were reviewed. Mr. Cushman seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent.

Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cushman seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Mr. Meyer and Mr. James were absent. The meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm.

Respectfully Submitted By,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia E. Brown". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Virginia E. Brown

Plymouth Town Clerk

November 2, 2023