

Supervisor James Schmitt opened the regular meeting of the town board of the Town of Pawling at 6:00 PM September 6, 2023 at Pawling Town Hall, 160 Charles Colman Blvd., Pawling, New York. Present were councilwomen Snow and Pitt, councilmen McCarthy and DeRosa, Nancy Tagliaferro, town attorney, Brendan Liberati, town attorney and approximately 8 interested citizens.

MINUTES

Supervisor Schmitt made a motion to acknowledge the minutes of August 9, 2023, seconded by Councilman McCarthy and passed with the following roll call vote:

MOTION: Supervisor Schmitt
SECOND: Councilwoman Snow

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Councilwoman Pitt – “AYE” Councilman DeRosa – “ABSTAINED”
Councilman McCarthy – “AYE” Councilwoman Snow - “AYE”
Supervisor Schmitt – “AYE”

RESOLUTIONS

The Board reviewed the resolutions and agreed they would be acted upon at next week’s meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Schmitt opened the meeting for public comment on agenda items, there were none.

DISCUSSION

SETTING CALENDAR DATES FOR 2024 BUDGET

Supervisor Schmitt said the budget calendar dates are as follows:

- a) October 4, 2023 – 2024 Budget Presentation
- b) November 1, 2023 – 2024 Budget Public Hearing
- c) November 8, 2023 – Adopt 2024 Town Budget

LOCAL LAW FOR SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Brendan Liberati, town attorney from Hogan Rossi & Liguori gave a brief summary on the proposed local law for solar energy systems. He said the town board will refer the local law to Dutchess County, as well as the Town of Pawling planning board for comments, and the board should consider granting an extension to the moratorium that is currently in place. He offered background on the proposed local law, saying in May, the town board approved a 180 day moratorium on ground mounted solar energy systems. The idea being to adopt a new local law which would cover solar energy systems, as at the moment there is not any specific zoning code within the Town of Pawling that covers that. An eight person sub committee was created and they have met multiple times. The two main concerns in the meetings were the creation of commercial solar energy systems within the Town of Pawling and they wanted to regulate ground mounted solar energy systems, as well as solar energy systems that were on non-residential properties. This led to the draft of the law presented to the board today. Should the Solar Energy Systems local law be adopted, it will become Section 215-38.1. He reviewed the local law with the board, saying that all large scale solar energy systems are prohibited within the Town of Pawling, whereas small scale solar energy systems are allowed subject to the conditions found in the local law, as well as other provisions of the Town of Pawling code. This was done

specifically for commercial solar. He explained the difference between roof mounted verses ground mounted solar systems and what would require an applicant to go before the town planning board or building inspector. He said next steps would be for the town board to refer the local law to Dutchess County and Town of Pawling planning boards for comments. Additionally, there is currently a moratorium in effect for one hundred eighty days. That will end at the end of October. Their assumption is that by the time this is passed, it will extend beyond that. He asked if the town board wanted to extend the moratorium. If so, they will need to schedule a public hearing to do so, so they should schedule a public hearing for the first or second meeting in October.

Following discussion, supervisor Schmitt made a motion to send the proposed solar local law to the Town of Pawling planning board and the Dutchess County planning board for further review, seconded by councilman McCarthy, motion passed unanimously.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD

Nancy Tagliaferro, town attorney said apparently there is an accumulation of money in the town's affordable housing fund. It got there from the enforcement of part of the town code regarding affordable housing. For a while, the town was collecting funds from subdivisions to be contributed towards implementing affordable housing in the Town of Pawling. It hasn't been enforced in a number of years and the monies in the fund can only be spent by an affordable housing commission, which the town no longer has. The recommendation would be to reconstitute the affordable housing board so the town can spend down the money that is in there on some worthwhile projects related to affordable housing, possibly and to amend the town code to take the affordable housing fund out because it is not being enforced. She said the town board would advertise for these positions and then appoint the affordable housing commission. The way they operate is set forth in the town code. The town board can't spend the money without an affordable housing board in place. She advised the board to take a look at the town code regarding affordable housing.

TOWN BOARD DISUCSSION

PITT

Councilwoman Pitt congratulated the recreation department for a successful summer camp season. The kids had a blast and she was grateful to have Robyn Priano, recreation director and all of her staff at the recreation department. She has been working on the new town website and making substantial progress. She wasn't sure of a completion timeline yet. She asked if we were selling hunting licenses this year and where people could go to obtain one.

Cathy Giordano, town clerk said licenses can be purchased on line.

SNOW

Councilwoman Snow said she would like to look into reconstituting the conservation advisory council. She would see if someone who previously served on that board would be willing to give the board a presentation on what they did in the past.

Supervisor Schmitt said the board will now need to find five seats for the affordable housing board and there is not a lot of interest in serving on these boards.

Councilman DeRosa said the conservation advisory board was very helpful to the planning board when they were active.

DEROSA

Councilman DeRosa said the road crew is working hard on Sanita Road. They are getting ready to pave the roads in that area. The other issue is the new water meters for PWD #2. The project was put out to bid but no bids were received. Ron Laberge has reached out to the contractors to see how the bid can be broken out to attract more contractors.

SCHMITT

Supervisor Schmitt said Friday is the opening under the lights game. There are many other games going on at the school.

SNOW/ICE REMOVAL RESOLUTION

Councilwoman Pitt and Councilman McCarthy asked many questions about the proposed expanded snow/ice removal contract with Dutchess County, for instance cost, staffing, equipment and liability.

Highway Superintendent Bob Brill said the goal was always to eventually take all of the roads back over. The town did all of the roads for fifty years and then they stopped. His reasoning for wanting to do it was better service to the community. The town highway department can be out on the roads a lot quicker than the county. He felt the town highway department could provide a better service for the residents. If there is a light winter, as was the case last year, the town would have a surplus of money that could be put back into equipment or infrastructure for the town. He thought it was a win for the town.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that this resolution would be on the agenda next week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Schmitt opened the meeting for public comment, there was none.

Supervisor Schmitt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM, seconded by councilman McCarthy, motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk