

REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 18, 2023 – REGULAR

Town of Inlet Town Board

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Frey, at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Highway Superintendent, Shawn Hansen, Park's Supervisor, Mike Bartolotti, IT Dennis Hudson, Publicity Director Adele Burnett, Jennifer Blakeman, Steven Young, Peter Funk, Julie Meeks, Tom Greco, Dan Keiferbach and Joe Spilka.

Officials present were Supervisor Frey, Councilman Schmid VIA Zoom, Councilman Levi, Councilman Townsend, Councilman Brownsell, and Town Clerk Yvonne Lutz.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Supervisor Frey stated that the Public Hearing for the proposed changes to the Short-Term Rental law is still open and will remain open until the May or June meeting. Joe Spilka expressed his concerns again and wanted to know if anything was planned with the Planning Board for a public meeting. Adele clarified that there will be a public meeting the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend and it will be open to the public. Adele is also advertising the next few meetings so that the public is aware. Supervisor Frey thanked Joe Spilka for getting the word out so we can receive any concerns from Inlet taxpayers. It was also clarified that the intent of the changes is NOT to limit or stop vacation rentals. Joe Spilka said that he isn't necessarily opposed to the change, but really disagrees with the moratorium. She has also spoken to others, and they feel the moratorium would hurt the renters. Many people cannot afford the property if they were not permitted to collect revenue or there was a limit on the revenue, they can earn from the property. The question of what if the property passes through family members, would they be held to the moratorium? Spilka feels that if it does transfer to a family member, the moratorium should not "re-start". He also feels that the regulations need to be for the entire town, not just zones of the town. A lengthy discussion followed. Supervisor Frey added that we are not the only town that struggles with these vacation rental issues and some properties becoming a "ghost property". We need to take a careful approach. are receiving the emails regarding the short-term rental proposal and that the public hearing is still open at this time. Adele asked if emails should be answered with at least a thank you reply. They are looking at a possible public meeting with the Planning Board to discuss the concerns residents have. Joe Spilka strongly opposes the moratorium and had many questions that Supervisor Frey answered what he could. Julie Meeks spoke that even though some landlords may be great, there are some that do not follow the rules and regulations. She feels that the moratorium may force some people to have a more vested stake in Inlet and not just use the property as investments. Julie Meeks does agree that families should be exempt from the moratorium requirement should they inherit the property. Discussion continued. Julie added that short term rentals scare her. She asked if the emails and letters are still posted online. Adele has been keeping them updated online. Julie added that we need to protect the people that do live here all the time. Steven Young spoke stating the trailer off Trail 5 may be what we are also trying to prevent. Tom Greco said that there are even brokers coming into town that are just using others to manage their property and may not even see the property. Different sides of the proposed regulation were discussed. Supervisor Frey said that VRBO's in different vacation spots are beginning to ruin the community.

MINUTES - Supervisor Frey stated that Deputy Town Clerk Amy did a good job on the minutes and asked if there are any changes. Hearing none.

“BATTERY FARM” - Dennis Hudson reported on the information regarding the battery system that is being built in Raquette Lake to supply energy backup during power outages. National Grid was the bidder for the project. It is considered an energy storage system which will provide backup power from Raquette Lake to Boonville and explained how it will work. Dennis was asked to help consult with local contact. Supervisor Frey made the statement that anything that makes energy more reliable he would be interested in supporting and added that lithium batteries are safe.

ASSESSMENT INCREASES - Joe Spilka asked about the increases in assessment. Supervisor Frey stated that NYS requires the Town to be at 100% valuation, therefore, all property assessments increased, the percentage depended on the location of the property and the comparable available for that area. Supervisor Frey explained that an increase in assessments does not necessarily mean an increase in taxes and explained the tax cap override. Steven Young asked if we would get an increase every year, which it was explained that there are only increases to keep the Town in line with 100% valuation.

COMMUNICATIONS – Supervisor Frey explained that we went to bid for an equipment storage shed and the generator that is needed for the communication towers. We only received one bid for the generator and none for the equipment storage building. We are asking for permission to relax the requirements for these items. He does not know when the towers will go live with all the delays.

PLANNING BOARD – Adele will be posting/advertising meetings that will be held.

PARKS – Mike stated that the clean-up has started. Water systems are being worked on. Shawn, Lenny and Mike checked the permeable sidewalks. They decided it really is not good for Inlet with all the salt and the winters we get. They feel it is not a long-term solution. Mike stated they need to fix the dry well in the corner of the parking lot. Lenny will look at that now that there is not any snow. Mike stated he needs clay for Arrowhead Park field. Two bags were not enough. Mike was told to order it and there is a possibility that the Youth Commission will split the bill with the Town.

PICKLE BALL – Dan Kieferbach may have found a grant, which may need to match funds. Because of this, he will need to know the level of support the Town is willing to provide. There will be another court at the golf course. Councilman Townsend asked about the amount of maintenance that will be needed and Councilman Brownsell asked about the lifespan. Discussion followed. Dan will need a letter of intent. Steven Young asked if we can re-line the tennis courts for pickle ball. The tennis courts get used a lot, so there would be too many conflicts. Dan Kieferbach is looking into what the requirements are for a 501C and what organizations can “hold” the money from grants and donations. Julie asked where the town money portion would come from. Discussion followed regarding the budget lines that were to be used for it. Councilman Brownsell made a MOTION the offer a letter of support, Councilman Levi SECONDED.

4 AYES 0 NAYS MOTION CARRIED

(Councilman Schmid was present via Zoom, no voting privilege)

MIGHTY LOONS - The Mighty Loons bought boards to help build a new rink in the future because they were used from Old Forge. They are looking for someone to take storage of them. There was discussion

on the considerable number of boards and where they could be stored. Councilman Levi will look at if it is something he could keep on his property.

POLICE – The bid to remodel the police station came in at about \$60,000. Still looking for more bids/quotes.

Looking at a possible extra floating officer for coverage in the summer to help with holidays and time off. Councilman Townsend made a MOTION to allow for the hiring of an extra officer if needed. Councilman Levi SECONDED.

4 AYES 0 NAYS MOTION CARRIED

CODES/ASSESSOR – REPORT attached.

HIGHWAY –

Plowed and sanded

☑ Cleared sidewalks, parking lots, etc.

☑ Hauled garbage and recyclables

☑ Posted town and county roads for spring thaw.

☑ Put the western Star dump truck back together and truck is back in service

☑ Started sweeping Route 28 corridor. Will sweep town and county roads after roads are unposted.

☑ Cold patched some potholes on roads.

☑ Added some lights in new shop

☑ Like to thank Aimee for including my letter to the property owners on Parkhurst Rd. for the culvert project

☑ Had a fuel facility inspection. No major issues.

☑ Started servicing trucks and equipment

☑ Helped Parks take down Christmas decorations along Route 28

☑ Measured up for sidewalks to be replaced.

Coming Up

☑ Hopefully, we are done plowing and sanding

☑ Haul garbage and recyclables

☑ Continue sweeping

☑ Continue servicing trucks and equipment

☑ Clean up spots from winter plowing

☑ Check out Moose River Plains Road to see what kind of work needs to be done.

☑ Hopefully get started working on the Moose River Plains Road

☑ Rake Uncas Rd, Evans Dr, and Gilbert Rd gravel section

☑ Just a reminder, we will be replacing a culvert on Parkhurst Rd in May. The road will be closed for 2 days and one overnight hopefully. I will know more about an exact date soon. I have asked the county for some assistance with a larger machine so it will depend on their schedule. I really want it done before Memorial Day.

USE OF MACHINE – Councilman Levi asked if Chip can use the small machine for some trail work. Shawn wanted to emphasize, he has NO problem with him using the equipment IF it is available.

HOURS – Highway is back to 4- 10 hour days. Mike added that he needs to discuss when he can have the employee that is also a Parks employee. Needs a defined answer so he can plan. Mike stated that he is more than happy to help with snow fence.

Transfer Station

☑ Open 4 days a week from 8 AM to 11:45 the 1PM to 6:45 PM closed on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. Closed from 12 to 1 daily.

☑ Building is clean and orderly.

☑ Starting on May 1 we will be open 7 days a week from 8 AM to 11:45 the 1PM to 6:45 PM. Closed from 12 to 1 daily for lunch.

INFORMATION OFFICE -

SNOWMOBILE Adele reiterated that we really need to have a snowmobile meeting with the Town of Webb. Town of Webb Councilman, Tommy Greco agreed and encouraged the meeting. He feels it is so important that we work closely. Adele added that it is a joint system, and it is crucial that everyone work together on it. Discussion on the idea of the Town Board meetings being changed so that Inlet Councilman could attend Town of Webb Regular Board meetings.

BLACK FLY - Adele reported on the number of participants registered each year, except for the years of COVID. In 2019 there were approximately 300 racers, 2022 about 800 and 2023 about 1,000 and it has sold out. Still looking for a band for the event.

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES – LIVING ADK - Dan Kieferbach announced that the Small Business Development Center, Small Business Association, and the Adirondack Economic development Council will be announcing “office hours” this upcoming year at the Old Forge Library, and possibly the Inlet School. They will help with writing business plans, help existing businesses get loans, and several other services.

TOWN CLERK –

LIQUOR LICENSE - Town Clerk, Yvonne Lutz reported that she received notification that James Adams has applied for a liquor license up at the Golf Course. It was received April 10, 2023. The Board had no objection.

MARRIAGE OFFICIANT LICENSES - Town Clerk informed the Board that NYS has now given legislation for the Town Clerk to issue a one-day officiant license to perform marriage ceremonies.

Town clerk also reported revenues for March.

HIGHWAY BILLS – Councilman Levi made a **MOTION** to pay all highway bills on abstract #4 (April) as presented. Councilman Townsend **SECONDED**.

5 AYES 0 NAYS **MOTION CARRIED**

GENERAL/WASTEWATER BILLS – Councilman Brownsell made a **MOTION** to pay all General/Wastewater bills on Abstract #4 (April) as presented. Councilman Levi **SECONDED**.

5 AYES 0 NAYS **MOTION CARRIED**

With all business coming before the board, Councilman Townsend made a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Councilman Levi **SECONDED**. Next Meeting will be held May 9th at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne Lutz, Town Clerk