

Town Board Committee Meeting
Catskill Town Hall
February 21, 2024 6:30 PM

PRESENT: Patrick McCulloch, Supervisor
Jared Giordiano, Councilman
Steven Espel, Councilman
Brian Kozloski, Councilman

Also Attending: Audre Higbee, Town Assessor
Ted Hilscher, Town Attorney

Supervisor McCulloch opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. There is no agenda for the meeting. He introduced Ms. Audre Higbee, Town Assessor, to give an overview of the revaluation process.

Ms. Higbee stated it is an intense process and is happy to respond to any questions. She explained the reasoning behind it and why the town needs a revaluation, technically in violation of the law. This process would encompass two years. The town would request proposals this spring, data collect and the final would affect the 2026 roll. The town has close to 6,000 parcels.

Councilman Kozloski stated from 2020 there has been 476 properties sold in the town and 30% residential sold over their asking price. He feels people are concerned about not being able to afford their home. Ms. Higbee stated that is a reality now. It is a misconception that the lowest priced properties go up the most as it will not hit any one class of housing. There are exemptions for those who are in need which allows them to keep their structures. Councilman Kozloski raised those houses sold over asking price would affect the revalue and that is a concern for him and Ms. Higbee stated there are also many arm lengths sales. They look carefully at sales. The state sets the equalization rate and ours is currently in the 30% where a few years ago it was in the 50%.

Councilman Espel asked if we did not have ARPA funds, if the town would be doing this as he does not feel it is the right time. Councilman Giordiano stated it is the one and only time as we are not using taxpayer money. If it is not done now, it will cost \$700,000 in two years. We have not had a revalue in 30 years and this will level the playing field.

Supervisor McCulloch asked if there was any further comment. Ms. Higbee stated to please reach out with any questions. There is a window we need to stay on the present schedule using ARPA funding.

Mr. Hilscher does not feel there will be a big correction in the real estate market like the one in 2008. If the board is thinking about hesitating because of a correction, it is not going to happen. Supervisor McCulloch stated this will all be taken into consideration.

SUPERVISOR COMMENT:

EPG Grant: The town was awarded a \$50,000 engineering grant for the I and I study in Cementon.
Resolution # 16-2024 on motion of Councilman Giordiano second Councilman Kozloski authorizing the Supervisor sign the Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EPG Grant Award for the Cementon I & I Study, Project No. 131619. Adopted Vote: 4 Yes 1 Absent (Scannapieco)

Summer Recreation: Supervisor McCulloch stated they will meet next week with the school district to review the Summer Rec program and he would like to hire Barb Erceg as the Summer Recreation Head Counselor. *Resolution # 17-2024 on motion of Councilman Giordiano second Councilman Espel to hire Barb Erceg as the Summer Recreation Head Counselor effective February 15, 2024 at a rate of pay of \$27.00 per hour. Adopted Vote: 4 Yes 1 Absent (Scannapieco)*

Firework Display: Email received from Natasha Law, VOC Trustee, to enter a 3-year contract for the 4th of July Fireworks Display at the cost of \$4,400 per year per municipality. Supervisor McCulloch stated we do not need to approve now and discussed the need for town events outside the village. Councilman Giordiano stated there is an event in Palenville and they will be asking the town for \$2,500. He is ok with committing to a one-year contract. Councilman Espel stated to table until we get the contract. Supervisor McCulloch stated we will send a letter to the Village asking for the contract.

Comp Plan – Supervisor McCulloch stated the town will seek a grant to update our comprehensive plan. He had a good meeting with the State rep last week.

CHPE – the power line had a slight change to the route. They will be boring under Route 9W.

Memorial Day Parade – the date and time are set.

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Giordiano stated we need to go out for RFPs for pest control of the pump stations. The soap scrapings are not deterring the pests. *Resolution # 18-2024 on motion of Councilman Giordiano, second Councilman Kozloski to advertise for RFPs for pest control the town owned pump stations. Adopted Vote: 4 Yes 1 Absent (Scannapieco)*

With no further business a motion to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation was made by Councilman Espel second by Councilman Giordiano. No further business will be conducted at the close of executive session. The executive session began at 7:17 pm.

As told by Supervisor McCulloch, motion to exit executive session and end the meeting was made by Councilman Giordiano second by Councilman Espel. Meeting ended 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Izzo
Town Clerk