

TOWN OF SALEM
APPEAL MEETING FOR MONOLITH SOLAR-6:00 P.M.
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING-SALEM TOWN BOARD-7:00 P.M.
APRIL 13, 2016 MINUTES

Present: Supervisor Seth Pitts; Town Council Members: Bruce Ferguson; Harold Gilchrest; Howard Law; Town Clerk-Patricia Gilchrist

Others Present: Joe Boisclair-Highway Sup't.; Donna Farringer-Courthouse; Wendy Bordwell-Georgi; Al Cormier-Historian; Maurice Patrick-Planning Board; Kimberly Erbe-Planning Board Clerk; Janet Donoghue-Planning Board Member; Eric Rogers-Water Dep't.; Bob Graham-Salem Fire Chief

Absent: DCO-Nancy Quell

Public Present: Bridget Cuddihy-Monolith Solar; Ryan Quinn-Monolith Solar; James Villanueva-Monolith Solar; Timothy Carr-Monolith Solar; Andre Rivera-Monolith Solar; Steve Erby-Monolith Solar; Ed Donoghue; James Bain; Marcus Blanck; Jay Bellanca; Tom Tanaka; Judy Flagg; Arthur Hempel; Cait Johnston-Journal Press; Ashleigh Morris-The Eagle

6:00 pm-Meeting called to order to hear the appeal from Monolith Solar regarding denial of their Site Plan review for a solar garden to be located at 1653 County Route 153; Map #193.-1-19.15. Tim Carr from Monolith presented a video in and around the Salem area, and then introduced Representative Bridget Cuddihy, who disagreed with the Planning Board's decision in February that the aesthetics of the site were not desirable and that the project brought no value to the Town of Salem. She attended approximately six meetings and had revised plans several times to make sure the site would be acceptable to the Board. Only 2.8 acres of the 5 acre site would house the panels and that 600 kws of solar energy was expected to be produced from the 200 panels, which would be shielded by a 6'-8' tree screen using fully grown or nearly fully grown trees. Monolith founder, Steve Erby, spoke next asking those present what will happen down the line solar farms are not accepted. Do we want more fossil fuels being produced? The farm will create jobs here; the area needs mowing and maybe hay could be taken off the property. There are educational perks as Monolith works with local school districts, encouraging field trips to learn more about solar. Steve explained that they would be buying the land, not leasing and that the garden would generate approximately \$800-\$900/month in sales tax to Washington County, the Town to see 7% of that. He explained that 7' steel posts are put in the ground to hold the panels and that a decommissioning plan is in place that puts in a buffer in case Monolith goes out of business and that anyone coming in has to honor the Contract. Several questions went back and forth with the public present and the Monolith representatives. Could community solar be generated so that the Town could use the power? What happens at the end of the twenty-year life of the panels? Key Bank has a major interest in the project as they will own the panels for the first several years. One resident asked what was used in the panel make-up and was concerned that that could become hazardous in the future; then what would happen? One major concern was the fact that the panels could not be assessed, only the vacant land and that the tax would only be increased as the value of vacant land tax rates increase, if and when it does. Mr. Erby stated that most of the land Monolith uses for solar farms is purchased, not leased. Another resident spoke in favor of the project saying that he had seen worse things to look at in and around the community and that he felt the project would be a benefit. After hearing all Monolith's representatives had to say, Supervisor Pitts asked if anyone from the Planning Board that was present wished to defend their position but no one spoke. Supervisor Pitts closed the hearing at 6:45 p.m. and on advice of counsel, Alan Wrigley, a motion was made by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, to go into Executive Session, with Attorney Wrigley and Town Clerk Patricia Gilchrist present; passed 4-0. Much discussion held in Executive Session regarding options, etc. but no decision was voted on. Motion made by Councilman Howard Law, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, to come out of Executive Session; passed 4-0.

Motion made by Councilman Howard Law, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, to approve the appeal of Monolith Solar for a solar garden, located at 1653 County Route 153 in the Town of Salem; passed 4-0.

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Minutes Since the public went outside during Executive Session, one of the board members informed them to come back in and that the regular monthly meeting would begin.

7:08 pm- Monthly meeting of Salem Town Board called to order by Supervisor Seth Pitts, followed by Pledge of Allegiance. Review of minutes from March 09, 2016 (regular monthly board meeting), March 23, 2016 joint (Dissolution Meeting w/ Village, Laberge Group, attorneys); March 30, 2016 (special Dissolution Meeting for Town Board); **motion** made by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, to approve the minutes from all of the above listed meetings; passed 4-0. After review of Warrants and Highway Abstract, **motion** made by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, to pay **Warrants #4** and **Highway Abstract #4 of 2016** as presented; passed 4-0.

Supervisor Pitts reported that the Board had approved the Solar Garden project by a vote of 4-0 in favor and that since no one from Monolith was still present, they would be notified.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Salem Fire Department- Chief Graham provided reports for February and March, 2016. Five calls for month of February: 4-Salem (2-EMS lift assist; 1-MVA; 1-power pole fire); Mutual Aid: 1-Cambridge (stand-by)

Training-Monthly required checks; communications training; pump training w/Shushan; OSHA training; 2-members still taking FF1 class

Meetings-Fire Dep't. held monthly meeting; fire advisory board meeting

Fund raiser-Super Bowl chicken BBQ

Total hours-1,130

March Report-6 calls for month: 4-Salem (1-gas leak; 1-EMS lift assist; 1-priority echo one; 1-MVA); Mutual Aid: 1-Rupert (MVA); 1-Shushan (chimney fire)

Training-Quarterly air pack; portable pump; building construction; monthly checks

Meetings-4 attended Chiefs & Officers mtg.; fire dep't. held monthly mtg.

Total hours-1,909

February and March 2016 reports will be filed.

Courthouse-Donna Farringer reported that the EFP grant was finalized and money should be coming shortly to pay the Town. Michael Gallagher will be doing a concert to benefit the Lunch, Learn n Play program.

The Chamber Music series will once again be presented and on May 7th the Kentucky Derby party will be held at the home of Bob and Carolyn Akland.

Lunch, Learn n Play-There will be a new program for the 5th & 6th graders this year and one for incoming kindergarten students. The program will run from July 5th-August 12th, 2016. Any donations to the program would be greatly appreciated.

Al Fresco Tickets-will go on sale the first Monday of June.

Georgi Museum-Wendy Bordwell reported that the collection has been data based. The Georgi received notice that the Estate of Kathryn 'Mike' Taylor left the Georgi \$5,000.00 and that would be forthcoming as the estate progresses.

April 28, 2016-Presentation by H. Wayne Trimm in Community Room

May 20, 2016-Steve Trimm will do presentation

May 22 & 28, 2016-Plant/Tag Sale

June 18-19, 2016-Fairies in the Hamlet on the grounds

July 23, 2016-Lunch, Learn n Play picnic

Mettawee Players, Hubbard Hall group and Café Lena programs will also continue this summer.

Tree Work-at the Georgi has been completed and that the site looks very good. Councilman Gilchrest also said that Johnson Tree Service had done an excellent job removing the trees, had been back to finish and that the project was a definite improvement. The cost, which is among the vouchers to approve at the meeting, cost \$5,500.00

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Meeting

Personal property value appraisal through Dudley & Dudley-Waiting for report.

Future Plans for the Museum-Plans for 3 primary spaces: Gallery, Main Room & Battenkill Center. Would like **Main Room** to be used for public use, such as: small concerts, readings, receptions, meetings, etc. This could be a rentable space but handicap accessibility will have to be researched. New furnishings need to be selected and the vintage set was mold contaminated. Gems/minerals would also be displayed in this area.

Gallery-Space to the left of the entryway. A select portion of the Georgi Collection could be exhibited here from April-October. Dehumidifier will maintain humidity at a level of 40% or less. If mold is still present on some of the items, the level will not allow the mold to activate. Guest curators/interns will assist with exhibits. Rotating the collection seasonally gives incentive for visitors/patrons to return each year. Doors to this space can be locked and secured.

Battenkill Center-this room is the former library, located at the back of the building. This room could ideally house Battenkill themed items/exhibits. Could be used for small classes, meetings, and gatherings. Bookcases would be removed that are currently wall to wall and used on a limited basis, as needed. The small room, formerly a kitchenette/office, could be another storage area, or could possibly be altered to accommodate a handicapped ramp.

Planning Board-Chairman Patrick reported they have site plan review applications for a house in Beattie Hollow and a barn on County Route 153.

Historian-Al Cormier provided the Board a letter re records management/archival storage and possible spaces for the same, with some construction renovation possibilities for the Board to consider.

Lakes to Locks-protecting Revolutionary war sites; book being done dealing with the Slate Valley from Salem through to Granville

DCO Report-Nancy Quell absent; February/March reports provided. February picked up a dog running on Rte. 153; checked out a dog running around on Main Street near Stewart's store. Picked up terrier and pit bull in March for housing; money rec'd. from owner of dogs. Reports will be filed.

Water-Eric Rogers reported that there are 306 hook-ups, using approximately 50,000 gallons a day. Doing iron/manganese testing. Work to do will include upkeep of wells and fire hydrant testing, which will be done early May. Approximately 200 valves need to be cleaned and repaired and seasonal meters will be turned back on. Maintenance of the water barn will need to begin with mowing and upkeep of the building.

Highway-Sup't. Boisclair reported that Eric Rogers will be working 20 hours for the Town Highway Dep't. and 20 hours for the Water Dep't. and that there was no surplus of help--boxes on truck need repair; Eric will need flaggers when working on valves, etc. Hard to complete all the work now that they have the responsibilities of the Village to contend with and could use another full-time person. Boisclair stated that he felt the Town would be saving money with another full-time employee because they can repair their own equipment and complete other jobs. Councilman Gilchrest reiterated that he felt the department should continue until the end of the year with the help they had with Eric now on board at 50% without hiring another full-time employee. Report provided will be filed.

PUBLIC COMMENT-Resident Jay Bellanca asked if Highway Superintendent Boisclair was asking for more money for this full-time employee. The money is already in the budget as the Dissolution Plan called for 1-1/2 employees for the highway dep't. and was included at budget time.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter read by Supervisor Pitts from Councilman Joseph Wever, who personally handed in his resignation to Town Clerk Pat Gilchrist on March 31st. He stated his resignation would be effective 03/31/16 at midnight and that he had enjoyed working with everyone on the board but was resigning for 'personal reasons'. Motion made by Supervisor Seth Pitts, seconded by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, accepting Councilman Wever's resignation, with regret. Passed 4-0

Hartford Steam Boilers-Received their report on the boilers at the Courthouse. Everything is fine.

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Minutes

Washington County Treasurer-Received correspondence from Treasurer's Office regarding 2016 taxes vs. other years if anyone wants to review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Corrective Action Plan-Supervisor Pitts provided the Board members with a copy of the report to be sent to the Comptroller's Office regarding the Corrective Action Plan for the Town of Salem.

Main Street Development Grant-more on this coming in May

White Creek Study re flooding-There will be a meeting regarding the hydrologist's study of White Creek at Salem Central School probably the second week in May. Date will be reported when known.

Alton Knapp from Knapp & Associates-Flood Plain Managers-Have the new Flood Damage Prevention Plan that Mr. Knapp left for the Planning Board, incorporating the Village into the plan. This has been updated from 1999 to 2007. This will become a local law so a public hearing needs to be set. **Resolution #42**-Motion made by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrist, to advertise Public Hearing for May 11, 2016 at 7:30 during regular monthly board meeting. Will need to check on number of days to publish. Passed 4-0.

Library-New librarian hired to begin on Monday, April 18th.

NEW BUSINESS

Sales Tax Resolution-Received notice from Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Washington County Board of Supervisors, advising that the Town Board must adopt a new resolution if they desire to have their portion of the sales tax allocation distributed to them. If the Town does not pass a new resolution, their portion will be left at the county to offset their share of the county taxes. **Resolution #43**-Motion made by Councilman Harold Gilchrist, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, directing direct payment to the Town for their portion of sales tax allocation for calendar year 2017 and thereafter. Passed 4-0

Clerk Gilchrist will draft the Resolution, which must be filed with the Washington County Treasurer, Albert Nolette, by September 1st, 2016.

Department of Health Letter re Salem Village Water-Supervisor Pitts provided the Board with a copy of a letter received from Maria O'Connell, P.E., Public Health Engineer, for NYS Department of Health. The letter provided the status of the water system as the Town has assumed the responsibility, with a summary of observations and required or recommended actions that she would like to see implemented regarding the water.

Mowing Bids-Opened bids for Georgi Museum; Moravian/Camden Valley Cemeteries; Main Street mowing; gazebo and carnival grounds; Town of Salem signs

Sacred Mountain Landscape, LLC-Scott DeMarco-Georgi grounds: mowing/trimming on weekly

basis-\$117.70, tax included; spring/fall clean-up-\$321.00 each

Signs/Carnival Lot-\$85.60, tax included; spring/fall clean-up-\$187.25 each

Sidewalk/Park Mowing-\$85.60, tax included; spring/fall clean-up-\$240.75 each

Travis Keys Property Maintenance, Inc.-Cemeteries/Welcome Signs

Moravian Cemetery-\$200.00/time

Eagleville/Binninger Road Cemetery-\$160.00/time

Revolutionary War Park-\$75.00/time

Welcome Signs at State Rte. 29 & Black Creek & County Rte. 153-\$40.00/time

Georgi Museum/Park Center-\$235.00/mowing and trimming, with 72 hour notice for special events

Lourie's Caretaking-Moravian Cemetery-\$200.00/time

Revolutionary War Park-\$300.00/time

Welcome Signs- 2 x \$25.00 = \$50.00

Main Street Sidewalks & Park-\$150.00 each

Georgi Museum & Park-\$225.00 each, with 36 hour notice for special events

John Sweet-Bennington-Moravian/Camden Valley Cemetery-\$150.00/mowing

Revolutionary War Cemetery-\$350.00/mowing

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Mowing signs-\$25.00 each

Mike Fish-Main Street-\$120.00/mowing

Carnival Grounds-\$80.00/mowing

Revolutionary War Park-\$80.00/mowing

After much discussion back and forth, it was decided that with one more full-time employee, the Highway Department would mow the Carnival grounds; Revolutionary War park; Main Street; the Gazebo; Streeter Park in back of the library; 'Welcome to Salem' signs.

Supervisor Pitts will do sheet for board on Georgi Musuem Grounds and cemeteries and send to everyone.

Open Board Spot-Advertise and see what happens to be opened at May 11th, 2016 meeting.

Lease Agreement w/Salem Fire Department-Resolution #44-Motion made by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, to authorize Supervisor Seth M. Pitts to sign the Lease Agreement with the Salem Fire Department and the Proudfit Trust regarding the rental space at Proudfit Hall where department trucks are currently housed at a cost of \$880.00/month until their new fire house is ready. This lease will be on a month to month basis until the fire company moves out. Passed 4-0

Sports Insurance-The Village of Salem provided an insurance policy covering Little League, Pee Wee Football and other sporting events for the youth of the community on Salem Central school grounds at a cost of \$895.00 per year through U. S. Fire and Insurance Company. This policy expires on May 1, 2016 and Little League is wondering if the Town will pick up this insurance. The Board felt they needed a little more information and just what was covered before they say yes or no. Supervisor Pitts will try and find out from the coaches and former Village Clerk, Rebecca Brown.

Planning Board Resolution-Received letter from Layne C. Darfler, Planning Clerk for Washington County, explaining that the Washington County Planning Board had entered into exemption agreements with local planning boards to exempt certain projects deemed to have no inter-municipal impact from referral to the County Planning Board. The current round of exemptions has expired and they are structured for three years. **Resolution #45**-Motion made by Councilman Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Harold Gilchrest, entitled 'Exemption of Matters of Local Concern from County Planning Review Agreement', that shall exempt matters of local concern under this Agreement from the referral requirements of GML 239 that shall exist between the County Planning Board and the Town of Salem Planning Board, and that said agreement shall apply to Zoning reviews and actions of the Town of Salem Planning Board, and that said Agreement shall take effect immediately. Passed 4-0

Other Topics to be discussed-Town Councilman Harold Gilchrest asked when the Town Board had made a decision to plow former Village streets, as the Highway Department did in the last snow storm. Highway Sup't. Joe Boisclair said they had to be made safe and that they didn't want kids falling and getting hurt. Dis-cussion followed and Councilman Gilchrest wanted it noted that he objects to the plowing of the former Village streets without paying and he still thinks a sidewalk district is needed.

Motion to Adjourn-Motion made by Councilman Harold Gilcrest, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, to adjourn the regular monthly meeting of the Salem Town Board; passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting-The next regular monthly meeting of the Salem Town Board will take place on May 11, 2016; review of Warrants #5 and Abstract #5 to begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by regular monthly meeting to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Patricia A. Gilchrist-Town Clerk
Town of Salem, NY