

Minutes

Town of Persia Regular Board Meeting

8 West Main Street, Gowanda, NY 14070

May 14, 2020

Workshop 6:00pm to discuss COVID-19 pandemic

Public Hearing 7:00pm

Supervisor John Walgus calls meeting to order at 7:00pm.

** Notice of the public hearing on updating zoning laws on kennels was posted in the Observer on May 5th and May 6th with same being posted on the Town of Persia website and the Town of Persia signboard.

All stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Celebrating Memorial Day

Roll Call:

Supervisor: John T. Walgus: present

Councilperson: Theresa A. Girome: present

Councilperson: Gloria J. Tomaszewski: present

Councilperson: Robert O. Dingman: present

Councilperson: Seth H. Howard: present

Others present:

Highway Superintendent: Daniel H. Ackley: absent

Town Clerk: Denise M. Trumpore: present

Supervisor John T. Walgus: * I would like to open the public hearing tonight for comment on updating the zoning laws on kennels. * This month we will observe Memorial Day on Monday the 25th. This year we can remember all those who have succumbed to the COVID-19 disease, along with all those brave men and women who have served our country, especially those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. * June 2nd from 4:00pm to 8:00pm will be the day people may talk to the Board of Assessment Review (BAR) about property assessments. The county team from Real Property and our BAR members will be here to listen to their concerns. I have asked a Town Constable to be here to direct people entering the building, we will be practicing social distancing and will only allow one person in at a time. * The AUD or

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the Annual Update Document (Annual Financial Report) has been submitted to the Comptroller's Office on time, and I have the document if you would like to look over the approximately 80 pages of our financial figures. Also, the general ledgers of all our transactions for 2019 is completed and ready for your inspection. On a lighter note, usually I would have to call some of the companies that we do business with and ask them to cash the check that we had issued them. This month when I went to balance all our bank accounts, every check had been cashed. This was the first time I was able to balance all the town accounts in less than 30 minutes. * We have received the first of two mortgage tax payments for Cattaraugus County and it was higher than I expected. * I want to thank VFW Post 5007 for the new flag they donated for the town hall, and to Pat Spruce for his assistance in helping me to install it, also to Roger Burzak in getting the clock on the town hall working again after a power surge knocked it out of service. * Gowanda Mayor Smith has asked me to notify residents that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the summer recreation program for the areas children has been cancelled along with the Memorial Day parade. Mayor Smith also said that the village will try opening the village office and the other departments starting June 8th, they will be taking village employees temperatures at their arrival for work and after their lunch break, the sensors cost \$80.00 apiece. * Due to this unprecedented time, we need to remind ourselves and our citizens to buy local and support our businesses who support us thru property and sales taxes. We depend on sales and use tax to fund our highway department. Every dollar spent elsewhere means a loss of revenue for the towns, villages, and counties. With numerous businesses now closed, we can expect a major reduction in much needed revenue. Because of a loss of funding streams such as State Aid – AKA – Aide & Incentives to Municipalities – AIM. Sales & Use Tax, Consolidated Highway Improvement Projects – CHIPS, Extreme Weather Funding, PAVENY, Court Revenue from fines and forfeited bail and Mortgage Tax, the Governor is predicting cuts and reductions of 20% to 50% to local municipalities and school districts. With this in mind, I am asking all department heads to forgo any spending other than crucial items needed to keep the town running. It will be a very lean year for 2021. * The Governor in one of his daily press conferences has made the statement that local governments **should enforce** his executive orders about violations of social distancing , gatherings, face masks, clandestine business operations and other non-compliance issues from his almost 300 orders he has issued in the past two months. Just to be clear, I would like everyone to be aware that I have absolutely no intention of having any of our residents arrested for violations of the Governors orders. * Due to Verizon's policy of forcing customers in the countryside to disconnect their money losing landlines by not providing repair services in a timely manner, the highway garage number 716-257-9322 has been disconnected. The phone was out of service numerous times in the past year, 10 days the last time. The Highway Superintendent recommended shutting it off. Now to contact the highway department you can call 716-353-6384. * Finally, to satisfy the seven phases the

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Governor requires to gradually reopen places of worship, businesses, stores, schools etc. COVID-19 testing is now required on a large scale. The Cattaraugus County Health Department will provide testing in our area at the Cattaraugus-Little Valley CSD bus barns on Gowin Gulf Road and SR353 just South of the Village of Cattaraugus. Go to www.cattco.org/covid-19-test to register. You must have an appointment; walk-ins will not be accepted and the test is free. The Deputy Clerk and I are registered to get tested. *I have paid the pre-pays and have processed payroll. * I ask for a resolution to approve the Supervisors report and a resolution to accept the financial statement from Bahgat & Laurito Bahgat. * I will need a resolution for a budget transfer due to an increase in our insurance premium. * Birthday greetings this month go out to Deputy Clerk Louise Hubbard on the 23rd, and Dog Control Officer Tammy Grimmer on the 24th.

Highway Superintendent Daniel H. Ackley: (by text) Good evening my fellow Persians, hoping all is well. Highway is on its third week of skid steer rental with great progress. * As we all know the pandemic revenues are going to take a hurting. Adjustments will be made to projects and spending until the unknown is known. The highway telephone landline has been disconnected so feel free to call highway cell number 716-353-6384 for any highway matters.

Councilperson Theresa A. Girome: * no report

Councilperson Robert O. Dingman: * I just want to say that the Chamber of Commerce will be putting a letter in the pennysaver explaining why the Harley Happening is cancelled.

Councilperson Seth H. Howard: * I attended the GOWANDA AMBULANCE BOARD meeting on April 21st via ZOOM. Statistics show that the Town of Persia accounted for 2.28% of the Gowanda Ambulance Service calls in 2020 thus far, responding to 4 calls in the month of January, none in February and 6 in March. It has been reported that calls are low, due to the virus. The Gernatt donated ambulance, designated 820, is in service with several members trained to drive it. As a reminder, this ambulance is outfitted as a bariatric unit and can handle patients up to 1000 pounds. This vehicle required extensive training, due to its overall size and weight being a considerable amount more than all the other emergency vehicles. The entire fleet is in service and equipped to handle our town's needs. Staffing has declined in the last month. Two prior full-time employees have dropped to per-diem status, one paramedic and one basic EMT. Two additional paramedics have been interviewed and recommendations were made for both to the board for approval. New hire Stacy Flick, AEMT, has finished her field training and is online, picking up shifts. It was recommended that two of the members be sent to paramedic school, the board approved that recommendation with hopes that they remain after their 2-year contract they lock into, upon completion. The gun raffle has been

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moved to August 29th. I only have 9 tickets left, should anyone wish to purchase one. The cost is \$10 for a ticket. Our next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on May 19th, at 7pm via ZOOM. & There will also be a drive-thru Chicken BBQ on June 6th by Weidners. * I would like to have a workshop on June 11th at 6:00pm to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councilperson Gloria J. Tomaszewski: * I attended a board meeting for Healthy Community Alliance by teleconference on April 15th at 4:30; there is one-bedroom apartment (tax credit vacancy) available for rent. There are eleven people on the HUD waitlist and there are no applicants on the Tax Credit Waitlist. * The 2019 Income Tax is being worked on and should be done shortly. * There is no tenant with the COVID-19 virus. * The next meeting is scheduled for July 15th.

Assessor Kate Harrington: (by email) * The 2020 exemption deadline was March 1st. Reminders were mailed to all Agricultural Assessment and Senior Citizen Exemption applicants who had not returned their renewal mid- February. This notice reminded applicants that renewals would not be accepted after the deadline. Our office also called applicants to remind them to submit their application by March 1st if we had a phone number on file. Any Agricultural Assessments or Senior Citizen Exemptions without a 2020 renewal were removed. * Eight properties with building permits and four properties that requested an assessment review have been visited. Assessments were changed accordingly. Change of Assessment Notices were mailed May 1st. * The Tentative Roll was created May 1st; the public can view it at <https://www.cattco.org/real-property-and-gis/assessment-rolls>. * The County Assessor's office is still waiting to hear how the Town of Persia will choose to hold its 2020 Board of Assessment Review on June 2nd from 4pm to 8pm. Once notified, our office will write a press release, update our website, and give the town information to post on the Town Hall door. (some towns are choosing to hold their BARs in person while maintaining social distancing guidelines and limiting the number of people in the room. Other towns have elected to hold their BARs by telephone conferencing. As grievance forms are received property owners will be called to make an appointment for a telephone meeting. The Real Property Offices' WebEx which is online video conferencing is available as well. * Five transfers were added for the month of February and two were added for March.

Town Clerk Denise M. Trumpore: *

Total transactions for April: 87

Total Collected: \$ 1,433.00

Towns Portion: \$ **443.90**

*I ask for a resolution to accept the minutes from April 9th.

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RESOLUTION # 43 Audit of Claims

On a motion of Councilperson Tomaszewski
Seconded by Councilperson Dingman
The following was
ADOPTED AYES – 5 Tomaszewski, Dingman, Girome, Howard, Walgus
NAYS – 0

**RESOLVED that the bills contained on Abstract #5 for General and Highway have been reviewed by the Town Board and are authorized for payment in the following amounts:
Abstract 5 – General Vouchers # 70 to # 82 Total: \$2,552.83
Abstract 5 – Highway Vouchers # 23 to # 28 Total: \$ 1,619.15**

RESOLUTION #44 Approval of Minutes

On a motion of Councilperson Girome
Seconded by Councilperson Howard
ADOPTED AYES – 5 Girome, Howard, Tomaszewski, Dingman, Walgus
NAYS - 0

RESOLVED to approve the minutes from April 9, 2020

RESOLUTION #45 Supervisors report

On a motion of Councilperson Howard
Seconded by Councilperson Dingman
ADOPTED AYES – 5 Howard, Dingman, Girome, Tomaszewski, Walgus
NAYS - 0

RESOLVED to accept the Supervisor report for April 2020.

RESOLUTION #46 Financial Report

On a motion of Councilperson Tomaszewski
Seconded by Councilperson Dingman
ADOPTED AYES – 5 Tomaszewski, Dingman, Girome, Howard, Walgus
NAYS - 0

RESOLVED to accept the financial report for April 2020.

RESOLUTION #47 Updating zoning laws on kennels

On a motion of Councilperson Girome

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Seconded by Councilperson Howard

ADOPTED AYES – 5 Girome, Howard, Tomaszewski, Dingman, Walgus

NAYS – 0

RESOLVED to update the zoning laws on kennels.

RESOLUTION #48 Budget transfer

On a motion of Councilperson Howard

Seconded by Councilperson Tomaszewski

ADOPTED AYES – 5 Howard, Tomaszewski, Girome, Dingman, Walgus

NAYS – 0

RESOLVED to transfer \$955 due to an increase in the insurance premium from A1990.4 – Contingent to A1910.4 – Special Items -Unallocated Insurance.

RESOLUTION #49 Workshop

On a motion of Councilperson Howard

Seconded by Councilperson Girome

ADOPTED AYES – 5 Howard, Girome, Tomaszewski, Dingman, Walgus

NAYS – 0

RESOLVED to have a workshop on June 11, 2020 at 6:00pm to discuss the COVID-19.

Hearing no objection, Supervisor Walgus closed the public hearing and adjourned the meeting at 7:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise M. Trumpore

Town Clerk

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