

MINUTES BOOKTOWN OF COEYMANS
August 18, 2015 – Town Board Workshop – 6:00pm**

A Town Board Workshop was held Tuesday, August 18, 2015, at 6:00pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: Stephen D. Flach, Supervisor
Thomas E. Dolan, Councilman
Kenneth A. Burns, Councilman
George E. Langdon, IV, Councilman

ABSENT: Peter E. Masti, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk

Supervisor Flach opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance and added that the record should reflect the absence of Councilman Masti.

AGENDA

- Resolutions
 - Solar/Wind/Farm Energy Systems
 - Accept Resignation of Clerk I
 - Re-Appoint Full-Time Clerk to Supervisor
 - Appoint Part-Time Bookkeeper

RESOLUTIONS

Solar/Wind/Farm Energy Systems

Supervisor Flach stated that he and the Assessor had talked about the NYS exemption for solar energy and most Assessors are not assessing for solar power or wind power devices on property and this would exempt anyone from being assessed for it. He added that his thought was that he didn't want to discourage people from using alternative energy and then asked if there were any comments from the Board.

Councilman Burns stated that the resolution says "but same will be inventoried as an improvement by the Assessor of the Town of Coeymans".

Supervisor Flach stated that it will be so the Town is aware of what is on people's properties and it will be inventoried but they won't be assessed for the value.

Councilman Burns asked if they would be assessed in the future.

Councilman Dolan interjected that nothing is forever.

Councilman Dolan stated that the resolution is that for 15 years they are not going to add it to the assessment but in year 16 someone could either extend it or decide at that point that it is going to be part of their assessment.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is actually for the 2016 Tax Roll so it is really just for next year and every year thereafter they will have to exempt it, which is actually only one year.

Councilman Burns interjected that as was previously stated, he doesn't want to discourage people from doing it and be afraid that after the first year they will be taxed for it the following year.

Councilman Dolan asked if it is currently being assessed.

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Supervisor Flach stated that it isn't and hasn't been but there have been some questions about it and the Assessor left it up to the Town Board whether or not to assess it.

Councilman Dolan asked if they know how many homes there are.

Supervisor Flach stated that he does not have that information but the Assessor has it and she is working on re-inventorying commercial properties in Town because buildings are often put up that are not known about.

Councilman Dolan stated that he was going to ask if there is time to take it off the Roll for 2016 but he is saying that it isn't on the Roll.

Councilman Langdon stated that the State Exemption is for homeowners and then asked if it would be for commercial as well as residential.

Supervisor Flach stated that it would be any place with solar, wind or farm energy systems.

Town Clerk Millious interjected that taxes would take affect with the school for the fall of 2016 and for property in 2017.

Supervisor Flach stated that next year, at the approximate same time, they will have to do it again.

Councilman Langdon stated that they may want to do it earlier than that so it is locked in and in place.

Councilman Dolan reiterated that there is no value on it right now but in the future he would agree that they should do it earlier.

Supervisor Flach stated that the Final Roll is by July 1st.

Councilman Langdon stated that if at some point it changes, they will want to give people the opportunity to grieve it so they might want to do it before the Grievance Day is scheduled.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is in May and he will check with the Assessor.

Councilman Dolan asked if there is actually a State Application that goes along with it.

Supervisor Flach stated that Application 4B-487 is a State Application and it is an exemption that the State is giving if you buy a solar panel. He added that the Assessor put that in because the State wants to encourage people to do it.

Councilman Dolan asked if it was the Assessor's idea.

Supervisor Flach stated that it was and asked that Councilman Langdon read the resolution.

Councilman Langdon continued by reading as follows:

RES. #102-15 APPROVE EXEMPTION OF SOLAR, WIND AND FARM ENERGY SYSTEMS

On motion of Councilman Langdon, seconded by Councilman Dolan, the following resolution was TABLED – VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 – SO MOVED

WHEREAS, solar and wind energy are now available and becoming more common in the Town of Coeymans; and

WHEREAS, most solar and wind energy systems are rentals and are not owned by the property owners; and

WHEREAS, the New York State exemption for solar, wind and farm waste energy systems (Application 4B-487) is a fifteen-year exemption for home owners who purchase solar and wind energy systems.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that effective for the 2016 Assessment Roll, the Town of Coeymans will exempt solar, wind and farm energy systems from being assessed, but same will be inventoried as an improvement by the Assessor of the Town of Coeymans.

Councilman Dolan asked if the Attorney for the Town had looked it over.

Supervisor Flach stated that he didn't believe so.

Councilman Dolan stated that most of the systems are rentals and not owned and the exemption would be for those homeowners who purchase it and then asked if it will include homeowners who rent it.

Councilman Burns stated that he thinks they are saying that the homeowners shouldn't be taxed because it is not their unit and not a permanent fixture.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is a good question.

Councilman Langdon stated that he does know that the State exemption is not just for people who purchase it, it is for leasing or whatever arrangement that they have and they are given the exemption regardless.

Supervisor Flach stated that with Solar City, you actually have a lease with them.

Councilman Langdon stated that you don't have to lease, it depends on what program you want to do and typically you don't have to put any money down and with some you can lease and eventually buy the system if you want.

Supervisor Flach asked if they want him to discuss it with Attorney for the Town Wukitsch and in turn discuss it at the Town Board Meeting on Monday.

Collectively the Town Board agreed.

Accept Resignation of Clerk I

Supervisor Flach proceeded to read the following:

RES. #103-15 ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF CLERK I

On motion of Supervisor Flach, seconded by Councilman Burns, the following resolution was APPROVED – VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Masti) – SO MOVED

WHEREAS, Susan M. King has submitted her letter of resignation as Clerk I.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the resignation of Susan M. King as Clerk I be accepted effective August 18, 2015.

Dear Supervisor Flach,

I am submitting my letter of resignation as Clerk I, effective August 18, 2015 at the close of business.

Sincerely,
Susan M. King

Supervisor Flach stated that Susan took a position at the Village of Ravena and advised him that it was a better opportunity for her. He added that she will be missed, she did a great job and was with the Town for several years and he told the Mayor and one of the Trustees that she is a very faithful worker, always on time and dedicated.

Appoint Full-Time Clerk to the Supervisor

Supervisor Flach asked that Councilman Burns read the following resolution.

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Councilman Burns continued by reading the following:

RES. #104-15 APPOINT FULL-TIME CLERK TO SUPERVISOR

On motion of Councilman Burns, seconded by Councilman Langdon, the following resolution was APPROVED – VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Masti) – SO MOVED

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Supervisor hereby appoints Matthew Weidman to the position of full-time Clerk to the Supervisor, effective immediately at the pay rate of \$24.54 per hour.

Supervisor Flach stated that Mr. Weidman was on salary from the beginning of the year, which was based on 24 hours of work each week and because of Susan's resignation he feels as though they need to have him here 35 hours, which is full-time and it would be in the best interest to the Town and Mr. Weidman to put him at an hourly rate to be more consistent.

Councilman Dolan interjected that there would be more accountability.

Councilman Langdon stated that there would be more consistency with the other workforce.

Councilman Dolan stated that the Supervisor's e-mail said that he could work up to 40 hours and then asked if the plan is for 35 hours.

Supervisor Flach stated that it will be 35 hours, which is what Susan worked.

Appoint Part-Time Per-Diem Bookkeeper

Supervisor Flach asked that Councilman Dolan read the following resolution.

Councilman Dolan continued by reading the following

RES. #105-15 APPOINT PART-TIME PER-DIEM BOOKKEEPER

On motion of Councilman Dolan, seconded by Supervisor Flach, the following resolution was APPROVED – VOTE – AYES 3 – NAYS 1 – ABSENT 1 (Masti) – SO MOVED

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans is desirous of filling a temporary part-time vacancy that exists in the Finance Office until the end of 2015 year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans hereby appoints Rachel Weidman to part-time Bookkeeper per diem at the rate of \$20.80 per hour.

Supervisor Flach stated that Ms. Weidman was his Clerk for the first two years that he was with the Town and then decided to move on, which is why she is not here now and added that she is great at the job, knows the job and had worked with Susan. He continued by saying that she does not want to work more than 8 hours a week and he asked if she would come and help them get through the end of the year with budget time coming up. He went on by saying that Susan did Bookkeeping between 2-3 days a week and the remainder she was Human Resource and \$20.80 an hour was her rate of pay for the bookkeeping and reiterated that Ms. Weidman will only be here one day a week.

Councilman Burns asked if he wanted to mention the savings.

Supervisor Flach stated that the one thing that was in his thought process is that they would see how it goes and if it does go through the end of the year, which he believes it will, the savings will be approximately \$6,000.00 in replacing with a Clerk I full-time who will not be taking the Health Insurance.

Councilman Burns stated that with there being a new program, Mr. Weidman knows it and everything is now done on the computer.

Supervisor Flach stated that when Ms. Weidman first came they were still doing things like printing out their own checks and not even using Quick Books and she brought it back to make

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them more computer savvy and she knows the budget process really well and then asked if there were any comments.

Councilman Langdon stated that his only question to him, which he asked earlier, is whether or not they were going over what the budget is for those positions combined and the fact that he came up with a \$6,000.00 savings makes sense.

Supervisor Flach reiterated that it will only be until the end of the year and at that point they will discuss then what they will need.

Councilman Dolan interjected that he thinks they are selling themselves and the front office short by having less hours and he thinks they should look to hiring off the Civil Service List and advertise for the position and Susan's letter is dated August 6th. He added that \$6,000.00 is good but hopefully it is not being unwise and foolish. He continued by saying that Ms. Weidman had done the job before and he does not doubt that she is capable of doing a good job but he thinks that they might need more people.

Supervisor Flach stated that Nancy Pike is going to pick up some of the Human Resources, like former Clerk Lewandowski did such as some of the Health Insurance things.

Councilman Burns stated that they will know in a couple of months how it is working out and they may find out that they will have to hire someone.

Supervisor Flach stated that if they need to hire someone full-time come January 1st, they will plan for that.

Councilman Burns interjected that he believes both of the positions should be permanent positions because every time there is an election the office gets flipped upside down.

Councilman Dolan stated that it's not true in this case and it's why you should hire off the Civil Service list.

Councilman Burns stated that he agrees.

Councilman Dolan stated that Town Law provides that the Supervisor can pick a Bookkeeper.

Councilman Burns stated that he hates seeing everything get flipped around every election.

Councilman Langdon stated that this situation isn't relative to an election.

Councilman Burns agreed and reiterated that it is the positions in general.

Supervisor Flach stated that there is no Civil Service List for part-time.

Councilman Dolan reiterated that he thinks they are selling themselves short by having a part-time person, they should hire a full-time person and saving a couple thousand dollars is admirable but to have a full staffed office is important also.

Supervisor Flach stated that it's not only the money, saving that money is a perk as far as he's concerned and it is more because of the time of the year that it is and he has to have a Tentative Budget out in a month and a half a half and he has to have someone who knows what they are doing and this is the reason.

Councilman Langdon stated that what Councilman Dolan is saying is that he would encourage another full-time person.

Supervisor Flach stated that he understands that and there is probably merit to what he is saying but he just wants to do it until the end of the year and re-evaluate before the final budget and then maybe hire someone full-time for January 1st.

Brian Rowzee, New Herald reporter asked if he could ask a question.

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Supervisor Flach stated that he could.

Mr. Rowzee stated that he had mentioned that Mr. Weidman will not be needing Health Insurance and then asked if it means that the will get a stipend.

Town Clerk Millious interjected that it would be a buy-back.

Supervisor Flach stated he wasn't sure and would have to check and normally it would be anyone who is full-time, they would either get the Health Insurance or the buy-back and continued by saying that he guesses that the answer would probably be yes. He added that as far as the solar energy systems, he will make an inquiry with Attorney for the Town Wukitsch.

Councilman Dolan asked if they can find out from the Assessor how many properties there are with solar and added that it seems like there is a contradiction in the wording as far as home owners.

Town Clerk Millious stated that for people in mobile home parks, they own their home but rent the property, which is confusing.

Supervisor Flach stated that he will get clarification from Attorney for the Town Wukitsch for the best wording and then asked if there were any other comments.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Councilman Langdon stated that he wanted to thank Susan for her service to the Town and he appreciates the work she did.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments, hearing none he offered a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

On motion of Supervisor Flach, seconded by Councilman Burns, the Town Board Workshop was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – SO MOVED

Time – 6:28

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED – As Read 08-24-15


Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk