

A Work Session of the Town Board of the Town of Clarence was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at Clarence Town Hall, One Town Place, Clarence, New York.

Supervisor David Hartzell called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. Members of the Town Board present were Councilmember's Bernard Kolber, Patrick Casilio, Peter DiCostanzo and Robert Geiger. Other Town Officials present were Director of Community Development James Callahan, Junior Planner Jonathan Bleuer, Town Attorney Lawrence Meckler, Town Engineer Tim Lavocat, Planning Board members Paul Shear and Steven Dale, Paralegal Cynthia Rosel and Director of Administration and Finance Pamela CuvIELLO.

Town Attorney Lawrence Meckler

Town Attorney Meckler has one item to discuss in Executive Session regarding pending litigation.

Director of Administration and Finance Pamela CuvIELLO

Pam put together a debt schedule so the Town Board could see where the Town is today and where the debt goes out to. Currently we are out to 2013. Total actual debt for 2016 is \$10,535,000 which the town has currently borrowed for (excluding the BAN) - 2015 is already in the budget. The Principal Bond Payment for 2016 is \$1,041,250 with \$265,831. in interest. BAN payments roll from year to year.

Pam has added the payments for the BAN for the borrowing for the property the town purchased (that will be closing on Friday) and also the Court Facilities building bringing the principal payments to \$258,900 on the BAN as well as \$1,041,250 in 2016 for the Bonds.

Supervisor Hartzell stated that the town is taking on debt for the Court Facilities Building and the Green Print Program in addition to that, there has been some discussion regarding a new football field. If all these go through, the question comes up as to how much debt is the town taking on and how much will it cost.

After talking to Bond Counsel, the town may not borrow the entire \$6,800,000 for the Court Facilities Building in 2016. The town will not have to make a principal payment on that in 2016 no matter how much the town borrows this year. But a \$200,000 principal payment will be made in 2017.

Bonds borrowed for in 2003 will expire in 2019, the 2005 borrowing will expire in 2021/2022.

Councilman Kolber requested a schedule of all Bonds and when they expire.

Two years ago Pam CuvIELLO and Supervisor Hartzell went to NY to get our Bond rating increased. Currently the town is at the best Bond rating we can get for a town of this size, we cannot get any better. Next year when we go out to Bond, they will not have to go to NY because the town is already at the best Bond rating you can get. Supervisor Hartzell stated that the only way to get a better rating is if we were a bigger town with more assets.

Supervisor Hartzell stated that the Green Print Program is just about out of money and the RAC will be requesting another \$12,500,000. Councilman Kolber suggested using Open Space Fees to pay for some of the property the town is considering purchasing. If Green Print property is sold, that money cannot go back into the program, it has to be used to pay down the debt.

Councilman Casilio stated that the State will be paying the town rent on the proposed Court Facilities Building. Pam stated that approximately 46% of the building will be used by the town (Justice Court and Erie County Sheriff's offices) and the NYS Police will occupy 54% of the facility however, they are not paying 54% of the Bond. Councilman Casilio stated that it would cost the town more money if we had our own police department.

Director of Administration and Finance Pamela CuvIELLO – request P/T position

Pam distributed a list of duties her former PT Bookkeeper performed on a day to day basis. Pam had Lorie compile the list so nothing would fall through the cracks when she resigned. Lori was here for five years and there were things that she did on a day to day basis that Pam did not have her hands on.

Along with Lori's duties, Pam put together a list of things she does which was a lengthy list. Currently she is doing both jobs – her job and that of the former PT Bookkeeper. Pam further stated that everything is not getting done. She is not nearly as efficient as she would like to be or that she normally is but there are only so many hours in a day and in a week that she can work. She is doing the best she can to stay afloat. The auditors are coming the first of March and she is hoping she is ready for them.

Councilman Kolber questioned the preparing of the W2's and the 1099 forms and asked if it would be more efficient to use a Payroll Service. Pam stated that it would be more costly. It is less expensive to do the work in-house, there is more control over the process.

Supervisor Hartzell stated that he spoke to Confidential Secretary Karen Jurek and she stated that while a Payroll Service makes sense on the surface, we have to input all the information and the Payroll Service processes the checks. It is easier to do payroll in-house. Pam stated that all the Payroll Service is doing is printing the checks, they will do the quarterly reports for an additional fee. Pam stated that she does the quarterly reports and they do not take a lot of time. She runs the reports and submits the information on line, it is not real time consuming. Pam says she does the W2's and 1099 forms. All she has to do is run a report, it creates the forms and she prints them. Payroll Services look like a good deal but they are not when you consider the bulk of the work is inputting the time cards. The only thing that is being input now are the exceptions – such as if someone takes a sick day, vacation day or personal day. Otherwise it just goes through and it pays the salaries.

Councilman Kolber stated that obviously there is a big salary difference between Pam's position and a clerical position for someone to be inputting information. He did not want to be paying Pam's salary for her to be doing lower level work which he feels she is being forced to do. It is time consuming for Pam to go through all the vouchers. Pam stated that even though the vouchers come down from the Department Heads and they sign off on them, she still has to go through them. She has found mistakes from other departments and there are things that she may have missed, but it is a process that has to happen. Pam goes through every voucher before the Town Board goes through them.

Councilman Geiger asked if Pam has been using part-time help. She has had a part-time clerk for a couple of days to empty her file drawers and to pull boxes out of the vault that can be shredded however, that is basically all she has done.

Councilman Geiger asked if a regular part-time clerk on a steady basis would take the pressure off of Pam for some of the mundane work. Pam said it would help, that was what Lori Plis did. Pam needs a regular person on a regular basis. She cannot have

different people coming in – it takes too long to train someone to learn the system and to learn all the procedures.

Councilman Casilio suggested taking someone from the part-time pool. Pam stated that there is no one in the part-time pool that has an accounting background. She needs someone who can make journal cash entries on a daily basis. They do not have to be a CPA but should have some type of accounting background.

Councilman Casilio requested that Pam list the number of hours it takes to perform each duty she has listed such as calculating mileage on town vehicles. Some of the duties listed are done quarterly or annually such as the W2 forms. Pam stated that this is all encompassing whether it is daily, weekly, monthly or yearly. There are things she does that she did not list. Councilman Casilio questioned one of Pam's duties was attended sewer meetings. Pam stated that she has not attended a sewer meeting in the last several years but prior to that she was asked to attend. Councilman Casilio stated that when there were other people in that office, it was hard to keep them busy.

Councilman Geiger asked if there were times when Pam was busier during the year. Pam stated that January to March are very busy months. April, May and June she is playing catch up from work that got set aside doing year end paper work. July is her slowest month. Budget reports go out in August, all the schedules have to be updated. September, October and November she is doing the budget.

Supervisor Hartzell stated that all the clerks in the part-time pool were hired to fill in for court and they have court background but do not have accounting background.

When Pam asked Lori Plis to compile her list of duties, she asked Lori to be honest with her because Pam needed to know if three days a week was enough time (Lori was a CPA). Lori was at her desk three days a week, every minute, she very rarely took a lunch.

Councilman Geiger stated that Lori has been gone a long time and this position has been discussed numerous times. Pam stated that she would like to get this resolved, she would like to hire someone to get them trained for nineteen hours a week. Those hours are not budgeted but she is willing to work around the budgeted amount to at least get the process started. The current budget has ten hours budgeted per week.

9:50 A.M.

Motion by Supervisor Hartzell, seconded by Councilman DiCostanzo to enter into Executive Session pursuant to § 105(1) F of the Open Meetings Law to discuss the employment history of a particular person; § 105(1) D proposed litigation. Upon roll call- Ayes: All; Noes: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Councilman Casilio, seconded by Councilman Geiger to adjourn the Executive Session at 10:14A.M. Upon roll call – Ayes: All; Noes: None. Motion carried. No action taken.

The Work Session reconvened at 10:14A.M.

Rotella Grant Management/Bernie Rotella – Pending Projects update

US Forest Service's New Community Forestry Program – a grant for a tree inventory (100% funded no match) was submitted December 5, 2013 and was not awarded however the granting agency is reviewing the current application and it will be resubmitted this spring. There was an exit interview with the Department of Forestry, they wanted to see the total application at \$25,000 max, the grant application was submitted for \$30,750.

Under the TEP (Transportation Enhancement Program), the Town was awarded \$415,600 for the reconstruction, replacement and installation of sidewalks on Main Street. Town Engineer Lavocat stated that the selection committee has selected a consultant and they are working within the guidelines of the State procurement policy under federally aided projects. He has to select a consultant and then negotiate the fee. The selection committee will report back to the Town Board with their recommendation once the State local agreement is finalized and signed in Albany which should take 6 – 8 weeks.

The Harris Hill Sewer Trunk Line Project was submitted to the Environmental Facility Corporation to review our water related projects specifically District #9 build-out and the Harris Hill Sewer Trunk Line. This was listed and scored 21/30 points. Our funding request was for \$42,000,000. Our next step is for a SEQR. Further discussion on this project is needed. As more information is gathered, the application will be updated which will give us more points for when funding does become available.

Town Engineer Lavocat stated that there are proposals in hand for the design and bidding of the Waterford Bike Path project. The Board has to decide whether they want to move forward with this now and Bond it (Bond it this year and get it constructed) as was previously discussed or wait for the next cycle of grant applications to be submitted in May/June 2015. If the Board hopes to get this constructed by this summer, we need to move forward, there is money in a Capital Account under Construction of Bike Paths which would cover the design and bidding for the project and then Bond the construction amount. Supervisor Hartzell stated that since the grant was submitted once and was rejected, we should just move forward with the project instead of waiting for the next grant cycle.

The town was awarded and collected \$76,330 for the purchase of a Brush Hawg Grapple Loader under the DEC Recycling Grant for the Highway Department.

A CFA was submitted for the Town of Clarence to rehabilitate the roof of the Clarence Historical Museum located at 10465 Main Street. This project will stabilize the post and beam timber frames, reinforce trusses, install a vented structural insulated panel roof system and replace underlayment, flashing, trim and roof accessories. This rehabilitation work will correct the unsightly and significant sagging that detracts from the building's appearance. It will also eliminate the leaking that has plagued the museum for years and protect its valuable contents. This grant was not awarded but will be resubmitted in May/June.

Clarence Needs Assessment Report:

Parks Department:

- Resubmission of the Tree Survey Project, this project will be rewritten to include a budget that is under \$25,000 which is a much more favorable cost for funding according the Department of Forestry.
- Roof replacement project for the Historical Society Meeting House, which was submitted to NYS Parks through the CFA, this application was not funded. This project will be submitted to other agencies for funding. Wilson Greatbatch

Foundation will be solicited for funds to help replace the roof. A special application will be submitted to Certified Local Government for this project. Resubmission to the CFA with changes made according to NYS Parks recommendations.

- Leaf Recycling Collection Vacuum will be submitted as a pre-application to the DEC Recycling Program, Parks Crew Chief James Burkard will provide RGM with price quote for this item.
- Portable Ice Rink Project – applications will be submitted to Niagara River Greenway and Erie Canalway Grant Programs. If Mr. Burkard decides to purchase playground equipment, Mr. Rotella would like prior notification. There are two grants that will give a 50% match which would double the playground equipment. ADA compliant restrooms can be combined with other projects.
- Project to bring electricity to the Farmer’s Market on Sawmill (West Shore Bike Trail) – this project can be submitted to the DOT under the TAP program by making this area a “Bike Hub” project. There may be an opportunity to add an Electric Vehicle Refueling Station to this area under NYSERDA Program.

Planning Department:

- Farm Land Acquisition Project of 180 acres – John Brennan from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets will be contacted to find the correct grant program that can be used to help fund this project.
- ARC/GIS software upgrades – NYS Archives will be approached as a potential source for the ARC software.
- Main Street Revitalization Project – work with Clarence IDA to start this project. The DOT will be included during the planning process. Local Government Efficiency Program has possible seed money for future study.
- Director of Community Development James Callahan would like to pursue grant monies under the Community Forestry Program for property identified as a rare Oak Savanna Forest.

Highway Department:

- GPS System/Radios for tracking town vehicles and map routes
- The next piece of recycling equipment is needed to be submitted as a pre-application.

Town Clerk’s Office:

- Potentially submitted an application to the NYS Archives to digitize building department records with a content management software.

Recreation Department:

- The DOT has a Safe Routes to School project where safety helmets and informational material can be handed out to young children.

Councilman Kolber asked Mr. Rotella for a list of all potential Grants. He would like the information to be distributed to town department heads so they know what is available.

Mr. Rotella stated that the town should be receiving his new bulletins every month that lists upcoming grants.

Town Engineer Lavocat stated that there is a NYS Office and Court Administration Grant that is available every year for \$30,000. Mr. Lavocat is hoping to get that grant for two or possibly three years since that is the duration of the Court Facilities Project.

Councilman Geiger inquired as to any recreational grants to clean up Tonawanda Creek for canoeing and kayaking, possibly a joint grant with Niagara County. Mr. Rotella will research this further and will report back to Town Engineer Lavocat.

Supervisor David Hartzell

Supervisor Hartzell had no report.

Councilman Bernard Kolber

Councilman Kolber would like to present a proclamation to Linda Mosher for her service to the town.

Councilman Kolber stated that NYS Agriculture and Markets has gotten involved with the Thompson Bros. windmill project.

Councilman Kolber will now be liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Councilman DiCostanzo previously had the assignment.

Councilman Patrick Casilio

Councilman Casilio had no report.

Councilman Peter DiCostanzo

Councilman DiCostanzo attended the Auditors Committee meeting. They have begun some preliminary work, the audit will begin in early March and the auditors will present their findings at the April Town Board meeting.

Councilman DiCostanzo announced an opening on the Assessment Review Board. James Shoemaker has applied for the position. Town Assessor Christine Fusco will interview Mr. Shoemaker and make her recommendation to the Town Board.

The Town is re-doing the Master Plan. Steinmetz Planning Group has been conducting Stakeholder meetings with the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Committee, Recreation Advisory Committee, representatives from Clarence School District, Senior Center, Clarence Hollow Development Committee, Historic Preservation, developers and other professionals in the business, Clergy Association and the Chamber of Commerce. The meetings have been very informative.

Ethic Disclosure forms have been distributed. The Ethics Committee will be reviewing them closely.

Parks Crew Chief James Burkard is requesting the 10 day posting for two laborer positions and one promotion to Groundskeeper position. A motion will be made at the February 11th. Town Board meeting.

Councilman DiCostanzo proposed some ideas for the property next to the farmers market.

Councilman Robert Geiger

There are two openings on the Senior Center Board, Councilman Geiger will announce the appointments of Rosemond Ruhland and John Crawford at the February 11, 2015 Town Board meeting.

Motion by Councilman Kolber, seconded by Councilman Geiger to enter into Executive Session pursuant to § 105(1) H of the Open Meetings Law to discuss the proposed acquisition of real property. Upon roll call – Ayes: All; Noes: None. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the Work Session adjourned at 10:50A.M.

Darcy A. Snyder
Deputy Town Clerk

Motion by Councilman Casilio, seconded by Councilman Kolber to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:55 A.M. Upon roll call – Ayes: All; Noes: None. Motion carried. No action taken.