

**Town Board Meeting held September 11th, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. at the Town  
Hall in Schroon Lake N.Y.**

**Present:**

**Town Supervisor:** Meg Wood

**Councilpersons:** Richard Gero, Lynn Donaldson, Leanna Welch, Steve  
Miller

**Deputy Town Clerk:** Erica Hedden

**Also Present:** Brian Ritching, Ethan Thompson, Sue Palisano,  
Dave Williams, Steve Cass, Berdie Bolton, Mickey Shufelt, Ethan Thompson,  
Albert May, Ken Welsy, Mike Welsy

Supervisor Wood called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. with a salute to the  
Flag. Supervisor Wood asked for a moment of silence to honor 9/11.

**Public Participation:**

Dave Williams stated; I have a couple things I would like to bring up, first of all  
I'd like to thank you for doing the moment of silence. I'd like to thank all the members of our  
community who are involved with emergency services and fire, to include our youth  
members. Thank you. I have some concerns or suggestions about the park. I know that there  
are some folks down there looking at the parks building, looking to make some changes. I  
was just hoping that the board would really think this through on what they want to do. A lot  
of people have been doing home remodeling on the street and it's really a residential street

now. It would be great if we could make some improvements to the parks building to help it fit in with the neighborhood. I understand that the driveway has been up for discussion on whether or not we are going to pave it. I am not sure what the long term plan is for that building, the building does require some Maintenance, for example the building is lower than the street and if you repave it, what's going to happen to all the water? If you have had a chance to look at it you will see that there is a drain that comes off of the town property into the neighbor's yard. That drains mostly water but there are also some remnants of gas and oil and other things. That's one thing that needs attention. There is also a salt box that has defiantly killed some trees there. I was just hoping that the board would really think towards the long run. I think the town should engage in conversation with the neighbors, get their feedback and input on what's happening on their street. Back to the topic of the paving, does the whole parking lot need to be paved? Is there a way to create enough of an entrance for the trucks to go in, and then potentially put up a fence or some shrubbery, to make it more aesthetically pleasing? The whole idea is as we make changes to our town, to make improvements to its visual appearance as well, especially in a residential neighborhood. There's definitely some big things that need to be addressed with the parks building but there are also several little things. Little things that can be done to make the building more pleasant to look at, and to overall improve the beauty of our town. I appreciate your time, if the board can include some of these ideas in their conversations, I would really appreciate that. Thank you.

**Presentation: Berdie Bolton – Chamber of Commerce sponsored Thursdays Craft**

**Show**

Berdie Bolton stated, hello everyone, I am Berdie Bolton. I represent the Adirondack artisan crafters, the Thursday craft show in Memorial Park. First, I want to say thank you for letting us complete our 13<sup>th</sup> year. It was a very successful year, despite the weird weather. Everyone had a good time; we got to do more this year. I have come to ask permission for next year our 14<sup>th</sup> year.

Supervisor Wood stated; ok we will be making up our calendar shortly and we will be sure to discuss it. We will be in touch.

Berdie Bolton stated, great. We have got a lot of really great feedback from people. They are very happy to see us each year. We are excited to come back next year; I can let you know the dates for next year.

Supervisor Wood stated, we really appreciate you coming back to a meeting and letting us know how it went. We really do like to hear how events in town go, and to hear the feedback from participants.

Berdie Bolton stated, we want to do Thursdays starting in July, July and August. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July falls on a Thursday. We do 9A.M to 3 P.M. we have done it for 13 years. Labor Day is August 31<sup>st</sup> a Saturday, and Memorial Day, May 26<sup>th</sup> which is also a Saturday.

Sue Palisano stated, those dates work for us, we can make that work.

Supervisor Wood states, ok when we make up the calendar we will include those dates. If there are any conflicts I will let you know. Thank you again for coming in. Thank you as well to the chamber of commerce for all their work.

**Resolution #166 Approve Minutes of August 14<sup>th</sup>, and August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 Meetings**

Councilman Gero moved a resolution to approve the minutes of August 14th, and August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, seconded by Councilman Miller; Carried

**Resolution #167 Approval of Vouchers**

Councilwoman Welch moved a resolution Approve the Vouchers, seconded by Councilman Gero; carried.

General Fund \$39,714.06 Sewer \$8,727.12 Water \$8,177.33 Highway \$377,198.07

**Resolution #168: Appoint Erica Hedden as Water and Sewer Tax Collector effective September 13th 2023 at a rate of \$16.50 per hour**

Councilman Gero moved a resolution Appoint Erica Hedden as Water and Sewer Tax Collector effective September 13th 2023 at a rate of \$16.50 per hour, seconded by Councilman Miller; carried

**Resolution # 169: Set date for Public Hearing on proposed Town Budget for 2024- November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 5:30 PM**

Councilwoman Welch moved a resolution Set date for Public Hearing on proposed Town Budget for 2024 November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 5:30 PM, seconded by Councilwoman Donaldson; carried

**Resolution #170: HVAC for Town Hall**

Councilwoman Welch moved a resolution HVAC for Town Hall and Parks Building, unanimously seconded; carried.

Ethan Thompson stated, unfortunately the system is not where I want it to be for this year, I'd like to be into a new system. Unfortunately that is not where we are and we are not yet ready for winter in terms of the heating system. The stop gap measure is to install an oil furnace to replace the one that failed. It is the simplest way forward we currently have an oil supply, as we have an oil system. It is as close to a plug and play that we can get. It's not quite that simple but it is close. I will do the installation myself as it says in the quote. Tentatively Paul Cooper said that he would also help depending on his availability. This is a very busy time of year for HVAC folks. Paul Cooper would do the start up of the system and the calibration.

Supervisor Wood stated, the furnace we are talking about is one of three. What we want to do in the long run is to get a more energy efficient system, which of course would be very expensive. Last year several of our offices had space heaters going in their offices to help heat and obviously that is not ideal.

Ethan Thompson stated, my recommendation would be to continue with the engineering, it's going to give them a little more breathing room. Have everything ready to go so we can go out to bid January first. I think that will give us enough time for contractors to bid and for them to obtain their materials before the spring. Not only is the heating system old but the cooling system is as well. Just as you said if possible it would be good to start exploring funding opportunities.

Supervisor Wood stated, if Paul Cooper is unavailable do we have a back up?

Ethan Thompson stated; yes, I could call Mountain Petroleum, or pretty much any heating contractor would be able to do this or Champlain valley heating and plumbing. You can see the rate that Paul Charges, the other companies are probably similar.

Supervisor Wood stated, the gas tank here, across from the library, did we install the ballers?

Ethan Thompson stated; not yet, this took priority to get this ball rolling, but it is on the list.

Councilman Gero stated, could this be retrofitted to go into the old fire house?

Ethan Thompson stated, the old fire house is a boiler, so it would have to be an entire conversion. I would recommend putting it out to bid for surplus, with a minimum bid and see what happens.

### **Resolution # 171 Approve heating system for Parks Building**

Councilwoman Welch moved a resolution to approve heating system for Parks Building, seconded by Councilman Gero, carried.

Ethan Thompson stated, the parks building has two ceiling mounted heating units, one of them has failed. The heat exchangers are cracked and can be no longer used. Both of those units are 100,000 BTU. I contacted F.W. Webb, they did a quick heat loss calculation and they said 50,000 BTU is more than enough for that space. I upped it a little bit because of the garage doors, being opened and closed. My recommendation is to replace both those units, even the one that is working, with two high efficiently propane

units. The two units can be purchased for the less than one oil fired unit. It will save on fuel; they are 93% efficient verses 83% efficient with the oil heaters. They have a separated combustion or sealed combustion system, which means they use outdoor air for their air circulation. The current units use indoor air, everything has run smoothly, but if by chance some one is working on something with gasoline and those fumes get into the air, we don't want that air being sucked into the combustion of that heater. It has a risk factor, it also gets very humid in that building in the winter and that humidity is being run through the burner and that's not a good situation either. I would do the installation; we have time on this one because the other heater is working at 100,000 BTU which is double what F.W. Webb recommended.

Supervisor Wood stated, where would the tanks go?

Ethan Thompson stated, the tanks would have to go in the back, unfortunately. They don't have to, but if we put them in the parking lot it creates issues. We could possibly hit them; we would have to put up the balers, plowing around them and things of that nature. I had Mountain Petroleum come out and take a look; they have more than enough hose to reach the back. The only draw back is that we have to use the small 120 gallon tanks. The set backs do not allow us to have a larger tank. We would need 2 to 4 tanks.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated, did you ask if they would charge us for the tanks?

Ethan Thompson stated, I called and I haven't had a call back. I am 90% certain the tanks are free of charge as long as we are using their fuel. They mentioned a rate to install the tanks but as far as I know there is no fee to use their tank, I will confirm that with them.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated, are those garage doors insulated?

Ethan Thompson stated, they are. They are not commercial grade doors though, so the level of insulation I do not know.

Supervisor Wood stated, this is something that we should really consider doing now.

**Resolution:#172 Approve water tap at 19 Chain Street, tax number 147.9-2-22.000, owner Kevin Doherty**

Councilman Miller moved a resolution Approve water tap at 19 Chain Street, tax number 147.9-2-22.000, owner Kevin Doherty seconded by Councilman Gero; carried.

Supervisor Wood stated; Bill Jenks signed off.

**Resolution# 173 Approve water tap at Cul-De-Sac end of Continental Drive**

Councilman Gero made a motion to table the discussion on Approve water tap at Cul-De-Sac end of Continental Drive until we have more information, seconded by Councilwoman Welch; carried.



Supervisor Wood stated, we will not adjourn this meeting to give them a week to come up with the required information to pass the resolution.

**Resolution # 174: Approve the lease renewal agreement between Town of Schroon (tenant) and the Hulst and Rigan Family Trust**

Councilwoman Welch moved a resolution Approve the lease renewal agreement between Town of Schroon (tenant) and the Hulst and Rigan Family Trust for \$1.00, seconded by Councilwoman Donaldson; carried.

**Resolution# 175; Approve appointment of Christine Stone as a consultant to the Town of Schroon to complete 2024 Town Budget preparation using the 2023 budgeted remuneration of \$1346.11,; and to provide future bookkeeping services as needed at a rate of \$25/ hr.**

Councilwoman Donaldson moved a resolution Approve appointment of Christine Stone as a consultant to the Town of Schroon to complete 2024 Town Budget preparation using the 2023 budgeted remuneration of \$1346.11,; and to provide future bookkeeping services as needed at a rate of \$25/ hr, seconded by Councilman Miller; carried.

Supervisor Wood stated, this is to help ensure that if our new Clerk to the Supervisor takes a vacation or gets sick that Chris can fill in for her in the event of her absence. Chris was never sick and never took a vacation; she was always around, so we never needed a back up before. The \$25 an hour is the rate she makes now.

**Discussion; Comprehensive plan initial core group meeting Wednesday, 9/27/2023**  
**at 6:00P.M**

Supervisor Wood stated, the comprehensive plan will finally have a core group meeting on Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, 2023 at 6P.M. Roger Friedman is the chairmen. Just for every ones' information, things are moving forward.

**Discussion: Pave Parks building parking lot**

Ethan Thompson stated, I just got the third quote this evening. Getting the contractors here and getting quotes has been difficult. I don't have anything to vote on today, tonight I was just hoping to discuss it and see what the time line might be for this. Currently the lowest bid, well two bids are the same price but they have two different ideas for how to approach this. One idea is to remove the material, the asphalt and prep the site and leave it through the winter and let Mother Nature settle the area, the other one would like to take it out and replace so it would be done before the winter. The lowest bids are coming in at \$20,000 dollars labor and the town would provide the material and the labor to move that materials. I haven't talked to Dana yet, so its not 100% certain that he has the time or the man power to do that right now. This is just to gauge of whether or not we want to do it this year or wait, and how we want to budget it.

Supervisor Wood stated, with the things that have been brought up today by Dave, issues like the drain will require more investigation and planning.

Councilman Gero stated, I have a concern with doing prep work this year and letting it sit all winter. Snow and ice are going to make a mess of that, it's going to cost

us more money to fix what gets tore up. It's inevitable that there will be damage done from the weather and from plowing. I don't think that is the way to go.

Ethan Thompson stated, the other bid is able to do the whole thing before winter.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated, do you know if the water run off is off the roof or if it's out of the parking lot?

Ethan Thompson stated, it's definitely not off the roof. The roof is perpendicular. I haven't measured it but it looks like the building is lower then the road and currently the side walk acts kind of like a gutter. It's extremely annoying for any of us coming in and out of the parks parking lot, especially for plowing.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated, when they pave the parking lot can they put in a drain that goes into a basin? Or do something to alter the current path of the water and have it redirected to a better disbursement?

Ethan Thompson stated, it's very possible. I believe that is what is behind the old fire house, it drains into a big beehive and it slowly seeps out into the ground. The "in's and out's" of that cost, I am unaware of. If we can figure out these draining issues would there be any interest in getting that done this year? The reason I ask is that parking lot is extremely rough and with the lip coming off of Fairfield Ave, its going to be rough on equipment. The truck that I use was used for plowing and it needed a major alignment, they were surprised at how far out it was. I wonder if it was something like that that caused the issue.

Supervisor Wood stated, the money is there. I think we should move this forward and not table it, but let's figure out what the whole package is.

Councilman Gero stated, I think now we have to go back to the contractor and address these concerns as far as grading and drainage, as well as aesthetics, it might affect what the bids were. We are going to want to figure out exactly what we want the parking lot to look like and then get new bids. It's September, it could be difficult to get it done in a timely manner. You said all three contracts can do it this year though right?

Ethan Thompson stated, yes and the highest bid said to maintain his price he would need an answer within the next five days.

Supervisor Wood stated, thank you Ethan.

### **Discussion: ARPA Funds**

Supervisor Wood stated, this is a brief reminder to us all about the ARPA funds, which are the funds that the Federal Government gave the counties and municipalities for sewer, water and infrastructure. The clock is ticking for us to decide on how we want to use them. We have \$ 188,605. We don't have to decide right now, this is just a reminder. This is town match funds for the Rogers Brook sewer project. We are not going anywhere right now with that, the DEC is holding us up; we are waiting for a response from them. We do have this money in hand, if we can't use it on Rogers Brook, I asked Brian in Sewer and I asked Water, to come up with one or two items that they could use the money for. Brian got back to me in about 15 minutes with a list of things. So this is just to keep it in the minutes and it doesn't slip through the cracks. We need to designate a

use for it in 2024. We have to tell the government exactly how we plan to use it, in order to keep it.

**Discussion: Schroon Lake Revolving Loan Fund Attorney**

Supervisor Wood stated, another issue. The town has a revolving load fund and the attorney record for that has indicated that he is no longer interested in doing that for us. I spoke with our town attorney and asked if he would be willing to take on the Revolving Loan Fund and he said yes. However, he did state he is the town attorney, should the committees have a problem with the towns' opinion on something, he would represent the town and we would have to find someone else for the Revolving Loan Fund. He has done this for another town, the exact same set up and the conflict has never arisen. I have called the people who oversee the Revolving Loan Fund and that will be all set and taken care of.

**Discussion: Senior Citizen property tax exemption amendment**

Supervisor Wood stated, currently the state has a senior citizen exemption. I am over simplifying this, but we have an exemption of 50% for senior citizens who turn 65 in the year they are applying for, if their house hold income is \$25,000 or less. The individual towns are allowed to modify the qualifications for this exemption within a certain degree. We had no way of knowing how changing the criteria for this would impact the town and our other tax payers, so we kept it at the same level as the state of New York. Our assessor, Neil Chippendale said that there were about 20 more households in town that were eligible for the exemption than the prior year. The dollar

amount that the exemption, exempt them from and its impact to the tax role was not significant. He did mention that because of the increase in social security in 2023, one of these people may not be eligible in 2024 because their income will go beyond \$25,000. Towns can increase the limit from \$25,000 to a higher limit, or we can establish a step system where the exemption goes down as the income goes up, a step system. For example we would keep the 50% at an income of \$25,000, but we could also make it 25% at \$35,000, that's just an example of the step system. We probably wouldn't see that much of a difference or impact to the tax role. We can move forward with this and try it, we can always amended the law later on if we think the impact is too great or too large of a burden to the other tax payers. I did speak with our town attorney and he said he was willing to help in any way he could on the legal end of it and the writing of the law. The town is legally required to notify the tax payers of this exemption every year. Last year it cost us over \$1,000 dollars in mailings to meet state requirements for notification. The county sent out those post cards last year that went to everyone. This year we would like to potentially include another slip of paper with the tax bill, saves us a little bit of postage. The assessors office had hundreds and hundreds of phone calls and only about 20 people that we eligible for it. This is an exemption that has to be applied for every year. I just wanted to bring it up so that everyone is aware that this is out there and we can continue to talk about this and come up with a plan.

### **Discussion: July Storm Damage**

Supervisor Wood stated, I know July storm damage has been on everyone's mind especially if they live in a certain neighborhood. We went to a FEMA meeting at the end

of August. FEMA and people from the state are coming on Wednesday to have a meeting. FEMA has certain steps that we have to follow in order to get their help. We have the county deputy chief coming down, as well as FEMA, the state and the highway supervisor. We have finally finished the Emerson road project from the Halloween storm. We have Miller rd, River rd, and Johnson pond rd; those are the main targets for our FEMA project. There are other roads that didn't qualify for FEMA help; we will have to deal with those roads ourselves. We need to plan for more and more drastic storms. FEMA covers 75% of the cost of repairs and I use that term loosely. In 2019 the state kicked in 12.5% of the cost, and the town was responsible for the other 12.5%. This year the state has not given any indication that they will contribute 12.5% again. So we need to be prepared to cover 25% this year. It would be interesting to know from Dana how many trucks loads went into Shore rd this year, and it's cost. It is a change, and we need to be prepared for it.

**Budget Workshop Dates and Change in October and November Board Meetings**

TOWN OF SCHROON  
BUDGET WORKSHOPS

October 3 2023 Tuesday 10:00 AM

October 6 2023 Friday 2:00 PM

October 12 2023 Thursday 4:00 PM

October 17 2023 Tuesday 10:00 AM

October 24 2023 Tuesday 10:00 AM

October 31 2023 Tuesday 10:00 AM \*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*only if necessary

Town of Schroon

October Board Meeting will be changed from October 9<sup>th</sup> to

Thursday, October 12, 2023

November Board Meeting will be changed from  
November 13<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, November 9, 2023

Supervisor Wood stated, I want to thank the chamber of commerce and all the town crew that helped with the street dance this weekend. It was a success, fire works went off ok. Thank Patrick and the highway crew for getting the life guard chairs out of the beach area so that we don't look like maybe we might be open. Thank you everyone!

Councilman Donaldson stated, I'd like to thank whoever is doing the flowers.

Councilman Gero stated, I just wanted to make everyone aware. Schroon Lake Community Church received Adirondack Architectural Heritage award for the reconstruction of the church. I think that's a really nice award to get, it's a nice addition to the community.

Supervisor Wood stated, yes it is. The church will be honored down in Luzerne on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. I will be attending and I hope to see others there as well.

Councilman Gero made a recess meeting to reconvene at 2:30 P.M on Monday September 18th seconded by Councilwoman Donaldson; carried.

I, Erica Hedden, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct transcript from the minutes now on file in my office and of the whole such original minutes.



Dated: September 15th, 2023 \_\_\_\_\_ Deputy Town  
Clerk