

Regular Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Ephratah Town Board was held at 6 PM on Wednesday, March 13th, 2024 at the Ephratah Town Hall. Roll call found the following members present:

Supervisor	Todd Bradt
Councilman	Andrew Chorlton
Councilwoman	Eleanor Smith
Councilman	George Cosselman
Councilwoman	Paula Keppler
Clerk	Cynthia Wesselmann
Highway Superintendent	John Polenski Jr.
Code Enforcement Officer	Devon Percival
Attorney	Michael Albanese - absent

The meeting was opened with Salute to the Flag, led by Supervisor Todd Bradt.

George Cosselman had a correction for the clerk on the last meeting notes regarding who led the pledge of allegiance, then proceeded to make a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the regular meeting on February 14th, 2024. 2nd by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried.

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to pay General bills, Abstract #3, claim 117 thru 132 in the amount of \$5,547.08. 2nd by Eleanor Smith. 5 Ayes, carried.

George Cosselman made a motion to pay Highway bills, Abstract #3, claim 133 thru 151 in the amount of \$10,598.50. 2nd by Andrew Chorlton. 5 ayes, carried.

Communications:

- The Fulton County Planning Board will be holding the 10th Annual Planning and Zoning training at FMCC on Thursday, April 11th from 3:15pm to 7:45pm.

Public Input:

- Resident Carl Ovitt Jr sent a message in thanking Highway Superintendent, John Polenski Jr, for the Highway Departments efforts on School House Rd.
- Resident Bill Simpson sent in a letter requesting the Town Board consider the possibility of lowering the speed limit on New Turnpike Rd from 55 to 45 mph. He has contacted DOT about this and was told that a request of this type would have to come from a Town Board type of authority for them to review first. Mr. Simpson believes the Town of Ephratah and Town of Johnstown would be in favor of this. This section of the New Turnpike Road has a 5-ton weight limit but 18 wheelers frequent on it and bikes and other push the speed limit on this stretch. He would be willing to do any leg work required to make this happen.

Reports:

Code Enforcement Officer:

- Devon Percival has submitted his report and is on file.
- He has calls in regarding a building on Mud Rd. and dealing with debris on School House Rd. Mr. Percival has also issued permits for an addition, a demo project and should be issuing a Certificate of Occupancy soon.
- Mr. Percival spoke on the Dollar General Engineers FOIL for environmental concerns.
- He had a call with DEC and Carver's DEC permit is still suspended.
- There is a title search in progress and one has been completed.

- Mr. Percival was able to get good information regarding all approved DMV regulated auto dealers in town and will be able to proceed with violators.
- The DOS annual report was completed and submitted with confirmation to the town.

Planning Board:

- The Chair, Bill Simpson, submitted their report held on the regular Monday meeting.
- The Planning Board approved a lot line amendment on the north side of 29.
- Mr. Simpson has interviewed two town residents who are interested in becoming planning board members. The Planning Board has voted and is requesting that the Town Board approve both members.
- The Planning Board talked to Mr. Percival about the fact that the Planning Board is required to review new or revised site plans pursuant to Chapters 29 and 118 of the town law.
- The next scheduled meeting will be June 10th, 2024 unless requested sooner.

Highway

- Highway Superintendent, John Polenski Jr, spoke with Nicole with the Gorman Group and highway will be able to use the stone out back. Carver is willing to let highway use their scale and they will be able to seal a couple of roads.
- The highway department will be removing lilac trees in Rockwood, agreed to by the property owner, and will be removing a stone wall on the East Rd.
- The highway department has also painted the graffiti eyesore, but will need to coat it again and they have removed a couple of trees on Hart Rd.
- Mr. Polenski Jr. mentioned that the Rural Funding Budget was cut and he will be actively pursuing any grants available.
- Mr. Polenski Jr. also said the loggers on Tillboro Road are willing to work with the highway department on any repairs needed.
- As Highway Superintendent, John Polenski Jr. reiterated Mr. Simpson's concerns about the New Turnpike Rd speed limit and said he believes the Town of Johnstown is on board as well.
- John Polenski Jr. also spoke with Frontier and resolved an address error and shared the good news that now the Town Barn will have fiber optics.

Resolution 47

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to accept Resolution 47 to have a study done by DOT, to reduce the speed limit on New Turnpike Road, from 55mph to 45mph. 2nd by Eleanor Smith, 5 ayes carried.

Youth:

- They are having an Easter party on April 23rd.
- They are planning a soup and sandwich possibly in Oct at the Ephratah Fire House.

Assessor:

- The Assessor, Lyn Yuenger, said they have completed data collections for the 2024 Tentative Tax Roll. The deadline for exemptions was March 1st, 2024. There were a few people who did not return their renewal and unfortunately lost their exemptions.
- Ms. Yuenger would like to see the town board meeting on line via zoom, as some people do not like to drive at night. She would also like public comment in the beginning and end of the meeting and for the Town Code to be put on the website.
- The Assessor's office will begin running the change of assessment notices and will be sending them out in the middle of April; along with the dates and times for open book and grievance.
- The office will also be reviewing the town code in regards to junk and will be reclassifying properties that fall into the category of junkyards; as it is well past time that land owner violators clean up properties and follow the town codes.
- Any questions or concerns please contact the Assessor's office at (518) 762-5688.

Supervisor:

- The Supervisors report was issued and is on file.

Historian:

- The Historian, Abby Cretser, has put photos on the wall at the Town Hall and next month will be having a Historical Society meeting.

Resolution 48

Eleanor Smith made a motion to accept Resolution 48 to reappoint Alan Cretser to the Ephratah Recreation Commission, with a 5 year term to expire 12/31/2028. 2nd by Paula Keppler. 5 ayes, carried.

Resolution 49

Eleanor Smith made a motion to accept Resolution 49 to accept Chris Pedro's request to become another alternate member of the Planning Board as he is unable to attend meetings on a regular basis; leaving a vacancy, term to expire 12/31/24. 2nd by George Cosselman. 5 ayes, carried.

Resolution 50

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to accept Resolution 50 to appoint Carl Ovitt Jr. of 225 Murray Hill Road, St. Johnsville, NY 13452 to the Planning Board as a member, replacing Chris Pedro's vacancy, term to expire 12/31/2024. 2nd by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried.

Resolution 51

George Cosselman made a motion to accept Resolution 51 to appoint Terry Weaver of 741 Old State Rd, Johnstown, NY 12095 to the Planning Board as a member filling the vacancy of Andy Paliling, term to expire 12/31/2030. 2nd by Andrew Chorlton. 5 ayes, carried.

New Business:

- The Code Enforcement spoke on a inquiry on battery storage, mega watt arrays, peaker battery banks and real estate. Mr. Percival would like the Town Board to consider a lighter addition of Zoning for the Town.
- Supervisor Todd Bradt spoke with engineer Charle Walz regarding the salt shed, but it is a conflict and he is unable to do it.

Unfinished Business:

- Supervisor Todd Bradt commended Chris Woodruff, with Little Guy Creations, for a job well done on the Town's website.
- Mr. Bradt said the Ambulance contract is for one year, as of January 1st, and is signed and on file.

Resolution 52

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to accept Resolution 52 to acknowledge the audit of the Honorable Dominic Arena's judges books to be in good order with a job well done. 2nd by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried.

Resolution 53

George Cosselman made a motion to accept Resolution 53 to acknowledge the audit of the Town Clerk, Cynthia Wesselmann with the clerk's books to be in good order; with a job well done. 2nd by Paula Keppler. 5 ayes, carried.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to adjourn the town board meeting. 2nd by George

Cosselman. 5 Ayes, carried. Time 7:32 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Wesselmann
Town Clerk, Town of Ephratah