

**TOWN OF COVERT
TOWN BOARD MEETING
APRIL 11, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Covert was held Monday, April 11, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town of Covert Municipal Building, 8469 South Main Street, Interlaken, New York.

Roll Call:	Supervisor Michael Reynolds	Present
	Councilman Jeffrey Vann	Present
	Councilman Gary Hunt	Present
	Councilman William Bishop	Present

Others Present: Town Clerk Colleen Freese, Highway Superintendent Jeffrey MacCheyne, Town Attorney Patrick Morrell, Reporter Aneta Glover, Assessors Jay Franklin and Iren Kehoe and other interested citizens.

Call to order: Supervisor Reynolds called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All rose for the pledge of allegiance.

Hunt moved, seconded by Vann, to approve the March 7, 2016 Regular Town Board Meeting minutes. Aye-Hunt, Aye-Vann, Aye-Bishop.

Presenter: Jeffrey Kostick, a business owner of Cayuga Lake Creamery on route 89, Interlaken, addressed the Town Board about the hike in the minimum wage and how the increase in wages will force him to raise his prices even more. A single ice cream cone now costs \$3.90, a 20% increase because of wage increase and supplier having to raise their prices. He said they will have to cut their staff in half and this will mean longer lines and reduced customer satisfaction and, therefore, reduce business. They are a significant tourism asset in the area, having been named one of the 51 Great Ice Cream parlors in USA Today. He said they will probably end up closing their doors and actually put 35 people out of work. Councilman Vann thanked Jeffrey Kostick and read the resolution recorded below in the minutes.

Supervisor Reynolds opened the floor for Jay Franklin, Town of Covert Assessor, to answer questions from residents on the new assessments for the Town of Covert.

Emily Aman addressed the Town Assessor and the Town of Covert Board about the reassessment done in the Town of Covert. (Letter Below)

I am addressing this complaint from an agriculture stand point. Though I have found many errors with our residences, they will probably be expressed by others who wish to speak. I believe that Mr. Barnett **is not qualified** to assess agriculture (farming) land. Either he does not understand how to value Ag land or was not aware of the publication of "": New York State -Ag assessment values per acre. These are guidelines based on Mineral soil groups. They do not tell the assessor what top value should be used but they show what percentage should be, down to the lowest soil group. The percentage for productive woodlands is 37%. Mr. Barnett proceeded to set a 50% figure based on the top of his set 100%. New York State Office of Real Property services has developed a simple and fair classification system to be used in assessment administration but apparently Barnett has chosen to ignore it.

When he spoke he said assessments were based on recent sales. There have not been any recent sales of farms in town of Covert. Ovid, Lodi, and Varick have each had one exceptional sale. The other sales in these towns have been \$3000 or less.

We just had our annual audit with a Seneca County Bank, and they are using \$3000 an acre as a guideline for loaning. Where did Mr. Barnett pull out the figure as \$4500 first acre and 4000.00 for the remaining acres? We are **Seneca County** and our **neighborhood** is still **Ovid, Lodi and Varick**. Our acres are just as productive as the others but not more productive.

Mr. Barnett has a certification according to what he submitted to us as his qualification. His certification is: **New York State Residential Real Estate Appraiser**: Under the "State Certified and Licensed Real Estate Appraisers License Law ". "Rules And Regulations, Title 19NYCRR BOARD OF REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL, Part 1101, SCOPE OF PRACTICE, There are 3 types of appraisers, **Certified general, Certified Residential** and **Licensed Residential**. Page 11 Part 1101, 1101.1 is Scope of Practice for General Appraisers. 1101.2 is **Scope of certified residential real estate appraiser**: **Quote: a) The scope of practice for a certified residential real estate limited to:**
1) the appraisal of 1-4 family residential unit without regard to value or complexity; and
2) the appraisal of vacant or unimproved land that is to be utilized for a 1-4 family residential unit without regard to value or complexity, or vacant or unimproved land for which the highest and best use is a 1-4 family residential unit without regard to value or complexity.

Mr. Barnett is not certified to value agricultural land or any commercial buildings. He never spoke to an **owner** . He put a figure on the property by just looking at a picture that someone took of your house. The pictures do not show the **whole property nor the surroundings of the neighborhood. Nor has he differentiated between unproductive woodland or brush land which has a lower assessment than productive woodland.**

The increase of Market value from \$181,000 to 258,000 may also adversely affect the financial support for education that this district receives from the state because, by magic and incorrect data we have become a rich area. After listening to the concerns of others I may be back next month with other blatant errors that have been made and not corrected by Barnett.

I plead with the board **do not** accept the valuation until it has been **fully corrected by someone who is qualified and looks at our neighborhood and respects that we are Seneca County.**

Steven Crane asked why his house increased \$90,000.00 and his neighbors did not increase at all. He was told it was used as a test house for the area. Many residents are concerned with the revaluation and the tax rate, how are they going to afford to keep their house. Comments were made that we are not Trumansburg or Ithaca area and Land in Town of Covert is not worth \$5,000.00 an acre. There was discussion about the Trumansburg and South Seneca school tax value and that it should be different.

Jay Franklin, Town of Covert Assessor, answered many questions and assured the citizens that there is still time to make changes. There is a process; call the Assessor Office and they can help you with the process. Grievance day is June 2, 2016 and if you're not satisfied with your property value you can go to grievance day. Jay shared that as the town assessor he will be reviewing 128 properties after GAR is done and he can make changes if he sees that it is not a fair value.

Highway Superintendent MacCheyne shared about the electric problems at the Highway barn and the bids that they have received are all different. Councilman Vann stated that he would do a scope of services so that the bids will be based on the same repairs needed.

Councilman Hunt reported that he is still working on getting more information on solar energy and he is talking with Tony Delplato. There are a lot of things to look into before any decisions are made.

Councilman Vann shared that they have decided to interview the four applicants for Town Councilman. There will be an executive session on Saturday, April 16, 2016 to interview these candidates. The applicants are Charles Bosman, Deborah Nottke, Robin Carlisle Peck and Brayton Foster. There was a fifth applicant, but it was turned in past the deadline for receiving applicants.

Supervisor Reynolds shared about the Ambulance rate and that The Trumansburg Village Board has adjusted there EMS rates and are asking the Town of Covert to consider changing their EMS transport rates.

Supervisor Reynolds shared that Time Warner Cable called and asked if the Town would like to update the speed of service they are receiving. The cost would be more for a higher speed. The Board did not want to increase the cost and suggested it be negotiated as part of the new contract.

Tony Delplato asked for the Town Board's support in getting the speed limit reduced along the western corridor on route 96A in and out of Interlaken. Trucks go down the road so fast and make loud noise. Other areas have reduced their speed limits going into towns.

Minimum Wage Proposed Resolution #3-16

WHEREAS the Governor's newly proposed & passed minimum wage hike imposes an unreasonable burden on the many small businesses, farms and non-profit organizations, as well as being a detriment to their ability to hire more youth, across the Town of Covert and Seneca County, and

WHEREAS many organizations, collectively representing millions of employees across New York State, oppose this new minimum wage, including the Seneca County Chamber of Commerce, Seneca County Board of Supervisors, and the NYS Farm Bureau;

RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Covert hereby voices its opposition to the recent NY State minimum wage increase as proposed and passed. Furthermore, the Town Board would like to recognize and thank Mr. Jeffrey Kostick for his efforts and directs that the Town Clerk shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, State Senator Michael F. Nozzolio, Assembly Minority Leader Brian M. Kolb, Assemblyman Philip A. Palmesano, The Seneca County Board of Supervisors, and other Seneca County municipalities and organizations.

Motion by: Councilman Vann, Seconded By: Councilman Hunt Vote: Aye-Vann, Aye-Bishop and Aye-Hunt.

RESOLUTION #4-16 Lower Speed Limit

WHERE AS the Town Board of The Town of Covert and residents of Village of Interlaken are requesting a formal study be done by your team for a variety of reasons including those listed on the attached petition. **WHERE AS** The south side of this roadway out of the village limit has just as many residents or more comparing them to what can be found on Rt. 96. The speed reduction zone on Rt. 96A should mimic the same 45 MPH speed reduction signs limits found on State Rt. 96 that enters the Village of Interlaken North and South;

RESOLVED, this is a worthy effort regardless of any accident history. Heavy tractor trailer use is part of the reason. Please review the above request and so advise if this study can be done. An acknowledgement and timetable as to when this could be started and completed would be appreciated.

Motion: Councilman Jeffery Vann Seconded By: Councilman Hunt

Vote: Councilman Hunt-Aye, Councilman Vann-Aye, Councilman Bishop-Aye, and Supervisor Reynolds-Aye

Vann moved, seconded by Hunt, to approve the Supervisor's income and expenditure report for March, 2016. Aye-Vann, Aye-Bishop, and Aye-Hunt.

Bishop moved, seconded by Hunt, to approve the Highway Superintendent's report for the month of March, 2016. Aye-Vann, Aye-Hunt, and Aye-Bishop.

Vann moved, seconded by Bishop, to approve the Town Clerk's monthly report for March. A total of \$685.50 was received and \$596.28 was remitted to the Town Supervisor. Aye-Vann, Aye-Hunt, and Aye-Bishop.

Vann moved, seconded by Bishop, to approve the Tax Collector's final report of \$1,820,909.24 was received for 2016 taxes and \$3,561.08 for interest and bounced check fees paid to the Town Supervisor. Aye-Vann, Aye-Hunt, and Aye-Bishop

Vann moved, seconded by Hunt, to approve the Code Enforcement Officer's report for the month of March, 2016. Aye-Bishop, Aye-Vann, and Aye-Hunt.

Hunt moved, seconded by Bishop, to approve the Dog Control Officer's report for the month of March, 2016. Aye-Hunt, Aye-Bishop and Aye-Vann.

Vann moved, seconded by Bishop, to approve the proposal to change the rates for the EMS Trumansburg Ambulance Transports. Aye-Hunt, Aye-Bishop and Aye-Vann.

Hunt moved, seconded by Vann, that Highway Fund Vouchers #35-50 in the amount of \$ 6,874.19 and General Fund Vouchers #62-81 in the amount of \$30,348.72 be approved for payment. Aye-Vann, Aye-Hunt, and Aye-Bishop.

Respectfully Submitted,

| Colleen Freese, Town Clerk