

TOWN OF COVERT
SENECA COUNTY
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Covert was held Monday, September 11, 2017 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 Gary Hunt	Present
	Councilman Jeffrey Vann	Present
	Councilwoman Deborah Nottke	Present
	Councilman William Bishop	Present

Others Present: Town Attorney Patrick Morrell, Town Clerk Colleen Freese, Highway Superintendent Jeffrey MacCheyne, Reporter Aneta Glover 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.

Supervisor Reynolds introduced Deborah Nottke, stating she has been appointed to fill the vacancies on the Town Board until December 31, 2017.

Approval of Minutes: Vann moved, seconded by Bishop, to approve minutes from August 14, 2017, August 20, 2017 and August 28, 2017. Motion carried Unanimously.

Presenter: Jeff Williams shared about Seneca County Transportation. It is a service that provides rides for residents of Seneca County to medical and dental appointments and other health related destinations. It is run by grants and donations. The drivers are all volunteers who receive fifty cents a mile. If you need a ride or want to volunteer to give a ride, please call 1-315-333-2179.

John (Jack) Moore, Letter to the Town Board

First off, I'd like to thank you for the unanimous support you showed for the hamlet of Covert in 2015 when I brought a petition, signed by many of the residents of the hamlet, requesting that the state lower the speed limit on Highway 96 through Covert. The state did their review in the early Spring of 2016 and ultimately decided not to lower the speed limit. I feel that if they had done their survey in mid-late summer, when traffic increases substantially with both visitors to the area and farm traffic, they may have approved the lowering of the speed limit, so we'll probably try again next year.

In the meantime, I speak for myself and many of my neighbors regarding our dissatisfaction with the busy gravel pit on Highway 96 just north of East Covert Road. We hope you will consider making changes to the pit which will be outlined below.

First off, it is important to state that the land that the gravel pit is located on in the hamlet was donated to the Town of Covert by the Chauncey Gregg family many years ago. Their donation was done with the wish that the Town of Covert move the old grange hall to the center of the land and then create a public park for all to enjoy. Perhaps that wish was not possible due to budget constraints, but it strikes many of us in our hamlet that using donated land for a gravel pit is a travesty considering the Gregg's family intent.

Second, the hamlet of Covert houses the only National Historic Register district in the Town of Covert and includes many old structures along East and West Covert Road, Highway 96, Lower Covert Road, and Schier Road. The National Register of Historic Places added Covert in 1980; the designation included 19 buildings, 4 acres, and 1 structure. Needless to say, the gravel pit sits smack in the middle of this district.

Third, our area is increasingly on the tourist map, and the Town of Covert now boasts 4 B&B's, numerous wineries and cider houses, etc. It makes sense that the leaders of our town would want to do their best to

make our town attractive to these visitors by moving an eyesore like the gravel pit to somewhere off the main highways that carry visitors to our local offerings, including the very successful Americana Winery, Brewery, and restaurant.

Fourth, there are many beautiful and historic homes in the hamlet of Covert, including the Cole-McDaniel House (commonly called "The Pillars"), the Pratt-Gregg-Salm House, and the Black Walnut B&B, among others. We'd like the Town of Covert to do their part to keep our hamlet pretty, which is difficult with the gravel pit in the middle of the hamlet.

In terms of what the Town of Covert can do to ease the eyesore known as the gravel pit, here are 2 recommendations that my neighbors and myself have come up with:

(1) Close the gravel pit and relocate it to the area in Interlaken that already has public land and maintenance buildings at the corner of Lakeview Street and Clinton Street. This area only has one house with a view of the public works, whereas the hamlet of Covert gravel pit is looked upon by the beautiful Covert Baptist Church and at least 8 houses. The public land in Interlaken is substantial in size and appears that it could easily absorb the gravel from the hamlet of Covert pit.

(2) Build a fence around 2/3 of the gravel pit to block off the view of the pit for residents (and visitors alike) along Highway 96 and East Covert Road. For budget constraints, an 8' vinyl fence could be built that would certainly ease the unpleasant (and noisy) view of the gravel pit. A fence wouldn't be necessary along the northern part of the pit, as there are large trees there.

My neighbors and myself understand the need for a town to have a gravel pit, but we only ask for your strong consideration of moving the pit or at least "hiding" it from view as much as possible with a fence. With our property taxes going up substantially last year, we hope that the Town can find funds to make this possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'd like to speak about this request at the Town of Covert meeting on September 11th if possible.

Best Regards, John (Jack) Moore

The Town Board discussed some ideas about the gravel pit and are going to look into seeing what might be able to be done, if stone can be moved somewhere else or maybe build a fence.

Councilman Hunt reported on the Town of Covert Bicentennial Transportation Day. The unveiling of the mural to show the different things the town has had over the last 200 years will be place on the wall in the Town Hall for all to view. There were around 200 people that came through for Transportation day. On October 14, 2017, there will be a barn dance at the Brook Farm.

Supervisor Reynolds shared about shared services and that the Highway Superintendent does not feel it will benefit the town at this point. The Town does not have the manpower or the equipment to plow the roads. The Highway employees are concerned about broken down equipment and being able to get rest during a big storm. It was agreed that the Supervisor Reynolds and Highway Superintendent MacCheyne will take a look at shared services again for plowing the roads. The cost of a new truck to do the plowing would be around \$235,000.00.

Supervisor Reynolds set dates for budget workshops for October 2, 2017 and October 16, 2017 at 6:00.

Hunt moved, seconded by Nottke, to approve the Supervisor's Revenue and Expenditure Report for the month of August 2017. Aye-Bishop, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Vann and Aye-Hunt.

Bishop moved, seconded by Hunt, to approve the Highway Superintendent's Report for the month of August 2017. Aye -Nottke, Aye-Hunt, Aye-Vann and Aye-Bishop.

Nottke moved, seconded by Vann, to approve the Town Clerk's monthly report for August 2017. A total of \$3,100.75 was received and \$757.32 was remitted to the Town Supervisor. Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Vann and Aye-Hunt .

Vann moved, seconded by Hunt, to approve the Code Enforcement Officer's report for the month of August 2017. Aye-Bishop, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Vann and Aye-Hunt.

Bishop moved, seconded by Nottke , to approve the Dog Control Officer's report for the month of August 2017. Aye-Hunt, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Vann and Aye-Nottke.

Hunt moved, seconded by Nottke, that Highway Fund Vouchers #133-149 in the amount of \$24,998.11 and General Fund Vouchers #133-144 in the amount of \$33,511.35 be approved for payment. Aye-Hunt, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Nottke and Aye-Vann.

Nottke moved, seconded by Hunt to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen R. Freese, Town Clerk