

April 4, 2023  
6:30 p.m.  
2354 State Route 434  
Apalachin, New York

### Regular Meeting of the Owego Town Board

#### A. Call to order, roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance -

The Supervisor called the meeting to order, the acting Town Clerk called the roll and Councilmember Jochum led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Council:

Present: Supervisor Castellucci, Dean Morgan, Craig Jochum, Jonathan Marks and Gary Hellmers.

Absent: None

#### Department Heads:

Present: Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor  
Joann Lindstrom, Planning & Zoning Administrator  
Scott Vasisko, Parks Maintenance Supervisor  
Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities  
Mike Roberts, Highway Superintendent  
Peter Gordon, Town Historian

Absent: Mary Kennedy, Town Clerk  
Irene Graven, Town Attorney

#### B. Minutes of the previous meetings -

The minutes of the March 21 regular meeting were presented. **Councilmember Morgan made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Councilmember Marks seconded the motion. All in favor.**

#### C. Consideration of bids –

##### 1. Fuel Station Tank

Supervisor Castellucci provided a summary of the bid process thus far, explaining that the town had originally estimated the fuel tank to cost \$302,000, but changes had to be made such as adding a canopy, integrating access cards into the town's current access system, and the need for a crane to set the tank. Engineering is estimated to be \$50,000-\$55,000, with a maximum of \$409,287 for the entire project. Councilmember Jochum asked about site work. Supervisor Castellucci replied that this cost would be for the tank only but ZMK would be taking care of the site work and Panko Electric would be the electrical contractor. When Councilmember Jochum asked about the cost-benefit to the town, Supervisor Castellucci stated

that not only will the project serve the town's purposes but will be another service the town can provide to other agencies in the event of an emergency.

**Councilmember Morgan made a motion to accept the bid from Environmental and Fueling Systems LLC in the amount of \$354,287. Councilmember Hellmers seconded.**

Supervisor Castellucci – aye  
Councilmember Morgan – aye  
Councilmember Hellmers – aye  
Councilmember Jochum – no  
Councilmember Marks – no

Passed.

D. Public Hearings – None.

E. Reports of Department Heads –

Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor – reported that May is his department's busiest month as they are preparing for change of assessment notices and Grievance Day on May 23, 2023.

Scott Vasisko, Parks Maintenance Supervisor – reported that camping opens on April 10 and 24 of the 30 seasonal sites are already reserved. Parks staff have been busy preparing all of the parks for opening. He sought the board's counsel on a proposed event at Hickories Park scheduled for July 16 at Pavilion #2. The volunteer police will be holding an event and have asked if they could launch a life flight helicopter. After some discussion regarding the proximity of the park to Lockheed Martin, the board was not comfortable supporting the helicopter landing and suggested the group consider an alternate town park.

Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities – requested approval for the purchase of a new sewer camera for the inspection of main sewer lines, the expense of which is included in his 2023 budget.  
**Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve the contract with HGC in the amount of \$53,823 subject to Attorney Graven's approval of the contract number. Seconded by Councilmember Jochum. All in favor.**

Mike Roberts, Highway Superintendent – reported that his department has been taking off plows and sanders, gearing up for the construction season.

Peter Gordon, Town Historian – thanked Abbey Ortu of Tioga County Economic Development & Planning and Joann Lindstrom Planning & Zoning Administrator for their help with the Cultural Resource Survey grant. The town will be notified in June, with Jeffery Smith, an Owego Town Resident, as the project's Architectural Consultant.

Supervisor Castellucci – reported that he has received the monthly reports from the Town Clerk and Planning and Zoning. Supervisor Castellucci then distributed information about an Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) grant and asked Tyson Stiles to summarize the project. The town is requesting \$50,000 for an engineering study of the outfall line at Sewer Plant #1, which has always been undersized even with the EQ tank when UV was put in. The project will include a study of bio solids as it is becoming more and more difficult to find a place to dispose of them. The goal is to become a Class A plant, where town can convert bio solids for sale or free distribution for use in flower beds, etc.

**Councilmember Marks made a motion to prepare and publish a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Councilmember Hellmers seconded the motion. All in favor.**

Joann Lindstrom, Planning & Zoning Administrator – No report

F. Privilege of the Floor-

Abbey Ortu, Tioga County Economic Development & Planning, explained that the county has 129 cemeteries and many of their associations are in financial peril. New York State is making funding available to help municipalities. The county, through the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP), is preparing a grant for \$26,000 to hire MRB Group to study several cemeteries including three cemeteries in the Town of Owego (Flemingville, Riverside and South Owego). Ms. Ortu is requesting contributions from each town, and will also be requesting funds from two local foundations. Scott Vasisko mentioned that the town currently maintains 8 cemeteries. The goal is to keep cemetery associations financially viable so the responsibilities do not fall to the towns. The grant deadline is May 15. Supervisor Castellucci suggested that the town may be able to contribute \$4,000 and the request would be added to the April 18<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Jason Bonsignore, Champion Speedway, requested that the town board consider renaming East River Road to “Champion Speedway”. Bonsignore explained that cell phone-based mapping applications confuse potential racetrack patrons because it is located at the end of East River Road (Owego) which turns into Old Narrows Road (Nichols). Henry Hines, Deputy Highway Superintendent, stated that East River Road is included in the town highway inventory. Mike Roberts mentioned that they are trying to keep road names as short as possible. Supervisor Castellucci stated that he would consult with the Town Attorney to discuss what steps would need to be taken to change the name and the request would be added to the April 18 Town Board agenda.

Rick McCann, Binghamton, stated that he has plans to address the unsafe structures located on his vacant property in Campville prior to the next town board meeting and he will be making a more serious effort to get things turned around. The Supervisor told Mr. McCann that he would send a note to the Town Attorney and Code Enforcement Officer conveying this information, but the Supervisor has been on the Town Board for 28 years and Mr. McCann’s property has been an issue for at least that length of time.

G. Presentation of Petitions, Communications, Notices and Transfers – none

H. Abstracts-

**Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve the following abstracts. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.**

A0 - General Fund	\$2,846.22
B0 - General Fund-Town Outside	\$481.28
DB - Highway-Town Outside	\$3,541.93
F0 - Water Districts	\$477.04
FA - Route 38 Water	\$477.04
G0- Sewer Districts	\$477.04
GA – Route 38 Sewer	\$477.04
	<b>\$8,777.59</b>

I. Unfinished Business – Unsafe structure – 5099 State Rt 17C

Code Enforcement Officer Bill Carrigg stated that Christine Urban, the owner of the house, has not made any contact with the Planning & Zoning office but Bob Struble had come into the office to speak with him stating that he had no intention of converting the house to an outbuilding.

**Councilmember Jochum made a motion to proceed with the demolition of 5099 State Route 17C. Councilmember Hellmers seconded. All in favor.**

J. Reports of Standing Committees –

Councilmember Marks – deferred to Tyson Stiles who reported that the town bought out all but one of its railroad crossing right of ways (ROW) from the railroad for \$18,000 in 2008. The town has been billed monthly for the remaining ROW, which was \$250/year but has now increased to \$2,300/year. Tyson is recommending that the town figure out how to purchase this last one and has left information with Attorney Graven.

Councilmember Hellmers - no report

Councilmember Morgan – shared a notification from the NYS DOT regarding the paving project on Route 434 (Marshland Road-east to Tioga County line) and State Route 17. Route 434 paving begins on April 17. Exit 66 will be closed during the Route 17 portion.

Councilmember Jochum – no report

K. Presentation of Resolutions, Motions and New Business –

1. Strawberry Festival Parade – Supervisor Castellucci shared the registration form for the parade for any of councilmembers who wish to participate.

2. Amend credit card policy – Supervisor Castellucci shared a table showing credit limits for each department, with a combined credit limit of \$30,000 and summarized a few other changes to the policy. **Councilmember Marks made a motion to adopt the amended credit card policy, Councilmember Hellmers seconded. All in favor.**
  
  3. Permission for floodplain training – Planning & Zoning – Joann Lindstrom requested approval for Ron Schmidt to attend the New York State Floodplain Managers conference in Syracuse on April 19 & 20. **Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve, Councilmember Hellmers seconded. All in favor.**
  
  4. Authorize Supervisor to sign MS4 Annual Report – Planning & Zoning – Supervisor Castellucci explained that the town has a contract with the Broome-Tioga Stormwater Coalition (BTSC) to submit each town’s annual MS4 reports to the DEC each year and was seeking approval to sign this year’s report. **Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve Supervisor Castellucci sign the report, Councilmember Jochum seconded. All in favor.**
  
  5. Resolution to appoint Town Justice – Supervisor Castellucci referred the Town Board to a resolution appointing Donna Joy Bennett to the position of Town Judge effective March 21, 2023. **Councilmember Jochum made a motion to approve the resolution, Councilmember Marks seconded. All in favor.**
  
  6. Adopt Amendment #6 – SSB Phase 1 – Supervisor Castellucci shared a Contract Amendment dated June 14, 2021 that was not approved on the date of issue. Councilmember Morgan made a motion to accept Amendment #6, **Councilmember Hellmers seconded. Supervisor Castellucci, Councilmember Morgan, Councilmember Jochum, and Councilmember Hellmers voted to approve, Councilmember Marks voted no. Passed.**
  
  7. Employee upgrades – Highway. Mike Roberts and Henry Hines explained that the highway department needs more operators and advancing four of their MEO2s to MEO3s would allow more staff to receive the proper training. Highway does not have any MEO3s at this time. Requesting a resolution, Councilmember Marks made a motion to table this request until the April 18<sup>th</sup> Town Board meeting. Councilmember Hellmers seconded. All in favor.
- L. Second Privilege of the floor – none
- M. Executive Session - none
- N. Adjournment -  
**Motion by Councilmember Morgan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Lindstrom, Planning & Zoning Administrator  
Acting Clerk