

Murray Town Board Meeting

February 22, 2021

Present: Supervisor Joseph Sidonio, Councilmen Randall Bower, Lloyd Christ, Paul Hendel and Michael Mele, Town Clerk Cindy Oliver, Assessor Louise Passarell, Highway Superintendent Dirk Lammes, Scott Underwood, TJ Knight, William Moroz, David Piedmonte, Dave Knapp, Eric Fredendall, Art Knab, Krista Wiley-Neale, Kerri Neale, Amy Machamer
Via Zoom: Attorney John Sansone

Moment of silence in memory of Evan Valentine.

Pledge to the flag.

Attorney

All are in possession of the Town of Murray Employee COVID-19 Prevention Policy that John Sansone put together. This policy is to be turned in to the County from all municipalities. John stated that the majority of this Town policy will be used, along with some additions for the State mandated policy which is due on April 1st. John will have the state mandated pandemic response plan to the Board so it can be approved at the March meeting.

Motion by Mele, Seconded by Christ adopting the Town of Murray Employee COVID-19 Prevention Policy for 2021.

After being put to a vote, the motion was adopted

Councilman Mele asked Highway Superintendent Dirk Lammes to take an inventory of all PPE the Town has on hand. We should have a 3-month supply on hand at all times.

Attorney John Sansone left the meeting.

Motion by Christ, Seconded by Bower approving the minutes of the January 6th work meeting as submitted.

After being put to a vote, the motion was adopted

Motion by Mele, Seconded by Hendel approving the minutes of the January 11th Organizational meeting and the regular Town Board meeting as submitted

After being put to a vote, the motion was adopted

Councilman Mele informed all that an ad asking for letters of interest for a Zoning Board of Appeals position was put in the Pennysaver and will appear on the Orleans Hub also.

Town Clerk

January receipts totaled \$641.00 with \$598.00 going into the general fund. Cindy supplied the Board with Tax Collection Summary. As of today, the Town Clerk's office has collected 81% of taxes.

Assessor

The office has been busy with ag. exemption renewals. There have been many new enhanced STAR exemptions this year also. If residents turn 65 this calendar year they qualify and there is still a week to sign up.

Councilman Mele asked if there is an exception for a start-up farm regarding the ag. exemption. Louise will give Mike that information.

Building Department

Kevin is not present but Supervisor Sidonio gave a brief update on the Comprehensive Plan. The committee should be ready to submit a draft to the board in April. In addition to the comprehensive plan, the committee is working on recommendations for amendments to the zoning ordinance. When finished, the Town Board will hold two separate public hearings but most likely on the same night. Councilman Hendel asked if the committee still meets remotely. Supervisor Sidonio said they do still meet remotely. Town Clerk Oliver informed Joe that Barbara Johnston does not send her a meeting link to post on the town website. Joe will make sure that is done for further meetings.

Highway and Water Department

Highway Superintendent Dirk Lammes updated all on activities of the Highway Department. Large amounts of salt have been ordered. The guys are doing a great job in keeping the roads clear and safe while not overusing the salt. A few temporary mailboxes have been put up and have had to do a few final meter reads. A couple of trucks broke down during the last snow event but the guys got them up and running the same night. The guys have also been removing the ice from the front roof. Sometime this week we will shovel the hydrants out. One employee has been sent to water school and he complete the course and passed the exam.

Councilman Mele informed all that the County Legislators commented on the great condition of the roads in Murray. Dirk said the guys do a great job and are here within 10 minutes of being called.

New Business

The Office of the State Comptroller has reported that sales tax revenue is down 3% from last January.

Old Business

Supervisor Sidonio wanted to follow up on the health insurance topic. At the February work meeting the Town Board decided to change the agreed upon reforms and reverted back to the old policy. He does not think they gave careful consideration of the facts. It is a national issue spiraling out of control for individuals and organizations. The 2020 audit recommended the management of health care. Councilman Mele said long ago that new employees should be paying more towards their healthcare premiums than current employees. Councilman Bower does not agree with the numbers that Supervisor Sidonio supplied the board with. The bottom line is the healthcare premium increased 3.5% and employees are increasing their contribution by 5%, so there is no extra cost to the town. The overall cost of healthcare increased from 2020 to 2021 because of additional employees/individuals to be covered.

Other Business

Bonadio is unwilling to negotiate the cost of the audit. Joe will meet with Tim Hungerford tomorrow to come up with a plan.

Motion by Christ, Seconded by Mele approving the Supervisor’s financial report and that the following bills be paid: Motion Carried

General Fund	\$18,655.70
Highway Fund	\$52,610.60
Street Light District No. 1	\$221.75
Street Light District No. 2	\$365.20
Street Light District No. 3	\$126.93
Water District No. 1	\$696.70
Water District No. 2	\$10,925.31
Water District No. 3	\$4,215.43
Water District No. 4	\$3,334.27
Water District No. 5	\$1,503.76
Water District No. 6	\$2,918.12
Water District No. 7	\$10,365.42
Water District No. 8	\$6,212.12
Water District No. 9	\$2,147.33
Water District No. 10	\$3,650.80
Water District No. 11	\$12,254.51
Water District No. 12	\$2,534.97
Water District No. 13	\$4,542.86
Water District No. 14	\$21.69
Water District No. 15	\$8,344.74
Water District No. 16	\$1,635.93
Water District No. 20	\$2,435.99

Public Comments

Eric Fredendall stated he believes the town employees should be able to keep their current plan. He can make it to work in the early mornings because of the great job the guys do with plowing at all hours of the day/night.

Art Knab said he wouldn’t want to get up and be on call 24/7 in the winter time. He does think the insurance should have been planned before the budget was set. Councilman Hendel told him that the insurance was set and we budgeted for it in our budget. The money is in the budget.

Kerri Neale spoke of the Town of Bethany passing a resolution to split New York State and asked the Town Board to consider passing a resolution also.

Amy Machamer informed all on her opinion of the purpose for healthcare. Planning for the future is a huge issue and we must have a conservative approach that considers the future.

Supervisor Sidonio said his job as Supervisor is primarily to oversee the finances of the town, make recommendations and try to save money where we can.

The employees would also appreciate having input when it comes to discussing this in the future.

Councilman Hendel asked all to remember how we started our meeting tonight. We need to put these issues into perspective. Of course, healthcare costs are important but when you think about Evan Valentine and his family, the 500,000 people we have lost in this country, it gives you a bit of a different perspective.

Motion by Mele, Seconded by Bower to adjourn the meeting

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia L. Oliver