

The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, October 4, 2021 at the Town Municipal Building, 10 North Broad Street, West Carthage. Present were Supervisor Ferguson, Councilmen Watkins, Waite and Gump, and Highway Superintendent Strife. Councilman Stewart was absent.

Supervisor Ferguson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Supervisor Ferguson opened the meeting for public comment. Frank Koster spoke in favor of allowing marijuana dispensaries in the Town outside the village. He discussed the dangers of illegal drugs, overdose deaths, and the benefits of legal marijuana and asked the Board to reconsider their decision to opt out. Supervisor Ferguson advised him that the Villages of West Carthage and Carthage and the Town of Wilna have not opted out and therefore may be the site of a retail dispensary. M. Gump discussed the process for a public referendum. F. Koster also shared information regarding the County's homeless population and the number of registered sex offenders.

John D. Peck, Jefferson County Legislator, updated the Board in regards to the County's plans for the ARPA funds they received this year. Under discussion is allocating \$1M dollars to the North Country Community Foundation for distribution to eligible not-for-profits; \$4.7M to support small businesses and landlords; supporting a local food movement; sewer infrastructure in the airport industrial park; support for public health and to replace the County kennel, and; reconstruction of County Routes 46 and 47 while maintaining scheduled capital plan projects. J. Peck also advised the Board that the 5th Judicial District has approved centralized arraignments which will presumably be conducted at the County Public Safety Building. J. Peck stated that County and stakeholder agencies are working on a plan that would include a single agency contact for addressing the homeless. In response to a question from M. Gump, J. Peck stated that the department of social services has been advised that sex offenders housed at Pleasant Night Inn are within sight distance of a playground.

Monthly Reports

- Councilmen – L. Waite questioned if there have been any further reports regarding a proposal to consolidate water resources with the Joint Village water board. Supervisor Ferguson stated that there has been no further information.
- Highway Superintendent – J. Strife reported that the department has been cutting back roadside trees and preparing trucks for plows. He informed the Board that he has received notice of retirement from Mike Eisel effective 10/29/2021 and is recommending Brian Post to fill the vacancy at the MEO rate w/ 26 weeks probation. Motion by L. Waite, seconded by H. Watkins to hire Brian Post effective 11/1/2021 at the MEO rate w/26 weeks probation. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Circuit Rider – M. Dietrich reminded members that the Tug Hill Commission's annual dinner will be held on 10/14/2021. There are three vacancies at the Tug Hill Commission at this time.

Motion by L. Waite, seconded by Supervisor Ferguson to approve the minutes of September 7, 2021 as presented. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by H. Watkins, seconded by M. Gump to pay the following bills as presented:

General #269-296.....	\$104,810.26
Highway #131-142.....	\$15,880.83
RACOG #14-17.....	\$575.00
Con WD#1 O&M #18-20.....	\$2,109.27
WD#2,4&5 O&M #63-73.....	\$8,506.24
SD#1 O&M #5.....	\$35,760.00
SD#2 O&M #36-39.....	\$1,221.26

Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The Supervisor's monthly report was read and discussed. In response to an inquiry from Supervisor Ferguson, D. Martel reported that ARPA funds are listed as a liability until the Board determines the dollar amount for the proposed use at which time they will be categorized as revenue. Motion by H. Watkins, seconded by L. Waite to accept the report as presented. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Supervisor Ferguson reported that the Town has received a "no designation" for the 2020 fiscal stress report and explained that the rating indicates no fiscal risk. The environmental report declined from a grade of 23 to 16 indicating progress.

New Business

- The 2022 preliminary town budget was presented. Motion by H. Watkins, seconded by L. Waite to schedule a public hearing on the budget for November 1, 2021 at 7:00pm. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by M. Gump, seconded by L. Waite to authorize the clerk to advertise for bids for on-road diesel, winter blend, propane and heating oil. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by M. Gump, seconded by H. Watkins to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Christina Vargulick
Town Clerk