

The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, August 7, 2023 at the Town Municipal Building, 10 North Broad Street, West Carthage. Present were Supervisor Peck, Councilmen Stewart, McMahon, Russell, and Uhlinger and Highway Superintendent Strife.

Supervisor Peck called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Supervisor Peck opened the meeting for public comment. Eldon Glick, Great Bend, requested the Town direct SD#1 operations to locate a sewer lateral identified on the district as-builts. Supervisor Peck stated that he would direct the operators to make the identification. Mark Pomerville, Great Bend, thanked the Supervisor for his assistance with water mapping and restated his opinion of the zoning officer.

**Monthly Reports**

- Engineer - Bids for replacing the highway garage furnace will be opened August 17, 2023.
- Councilmen – B. Russell asked if the Town could consider veterans’ banners in Champion/Great Bend. J. Uhlinger discussed migrant housing, V/West Carthage regulations for marijuana sales/use, and changing town elected terms to three years.
- Highway Superintendent – J. Strife reported on assisting other municipalities with paving, waterline mowing, and road washouts. The auction for the surplus generator has closed with a final bid of \$3,550. Motion by J. Uhlinger, seconded by B. Russell to sell the generator as bid. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried. B. Russell questioned how the highway department will plow if the new truck has not arrived. J. Strife stated that the 2004 Mack will be put into service. J. Strife asked the Board to consider waiving the license requirement to allow the hire of qualified persons who would be trained by the department and receive support to complete the required classroom training to take the commercial driving test. The Board supported the proposal and questioned the cost and required employment commitment by the individual hire.
- Assessor – W. Vargulick questioned if the Board wanted to authorize an assessment trend to return the equalization rate to 100% from the current 91%. If so, he must contact the NYS Office of Real Property for utility appraisals this month. Supervisor Peck stated that to let the equalization rate drop further disadvantages fixed income taxpayers and supported authorizing the trend. J. Uhlinger stated that the Board would need to pay close attention to the tax rate following the trend. W. McMahon questioned if the housing market has reached its peak. W. Vargulick stated that sales prices are still rising. Motion by Supervisor Peck, seconded by T. Stewart to authorize the Assessor to conduct a trending. Vote: T. Stewart-aye, W. McMahon-aye, B. Russell-nay, J. Uhlinger-nay, and Supervisor Peck-aye. Motion approved.
- Planning Board/Zoning Officer – The Zoning Officer’s monthly report was distributed.
- Circuit Rider – M. Dietrich reported on upcoming Tug Hill Commission workshops and the proposed fall roundtable.

Motion by B. Russell, seconded by J. Uhlinger to approve the minutes of July 10, 2023 as presented. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by W. McMahon to pay the following bills as presented:

General #180-204.....	\$19,021.77
Highway #110-117.....	\$14,518.87
Con WD#1 O&M #24-25.....	\$702.33
WD#2,4&5 O&M #56-61.....	\$32,487.65
SD#2 O&M #26.....	\$901.50

Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The Supervisor's report was read and discussed. Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by B. Russell to accept the report as presented. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Supervisor Peck advised that a letter has been received from NYS DOT regarding the request to change the speed limit on North Lake Road. Based on the speed surveys, crash history and consultation with the NYS Police, it was determined that a reduction in the existing speed limit is not warranted at this time.

Supervisor Peck reported that the Town Attorney has determined that the positions of Planning Board Chair and Zoning Enforcement Officer are compatible and may be held by the same individual.

John Peck, County Legislator, noted the approved County snow & ice agreement, adding a decision regarding 4-year term for the legislature to the ballot, work at the airport, and an extension to shared sales tax.

**New Business**

- Board members reviewed quotes from DANC and Bernier, Carr & Associates to prepare the required Lead Service Line Inventory. The quotes were \$27,000 and \$6,500 respectively. Motion by J. Uhlinger, seconded by W. McMahon to accept the quote from Bernier, Carr & Associates. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Resolution offered by Councilman Uhlinger; seconded by Councilman Russell: WHEREAS, the Towns of Champion and Wilna, and Villages of Carthage and West Carthage, share a section of the Black River on which several renewable energy projects exist in the form of hydropower, and a natural gas generation facility with the potential for producing energy from hydrogen; and WHEREAS, this locally produced energy goes into the grid, providing no direct benefit to the community; and WHEREAS, Acadia Energy Corporation and its partners seek to explore opportunities to develop Energy Based Systems that could be located in our river area communities; provide lower-cost energy to local residents, businesses, and community organizations; serve as an asset to attract additional economic development; and provide revenue to sustain operations for the benefit of the community; and WHEREAS, the Towns of Champion and Wilna, and villages of Carthage and West Carthage have a proven history of working together effectively as fellow members of the River Area Council of Governments; having undertaken joint planning and zoning activities; and all having representation on the Carthage Industrial Development Corporation board of directors; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Champion does hereby express its support for Acadia Energy's grant application for funding to support the necessary engineering and pre-development work needed to advance potential projects and furthermore; Express our interest in utilizing locally generated renewable energy from such projects for our own facilities, and in facilitating its availability to the wider community so that our citizens and business community may benefit from locally produce renewable energy.

Supervisor Peck.....aye  
Councilman Stewart.....aye  
Councilman McMahon.....aye  
Councilman Russell.....aye  
Councilman Uhlinger.....aye

Resolution adopted.

- Motion by B. Russell, seconded by W. McMahon to reschedule the September board meeting for September 5, 2023 due to Labor Day and schedule a budget meeting for September 25, 2023 at 4:30pm. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Resolution offered by Councilman Uhlinger; seconded by Councilman McMahon:

RESOLVED, that the Town of Champion hereby approves the Operations & Maintenance Service Agreement between the Town of Champion and the Development Authority of the North Country for Town Sewer District No. 2 as set forth effective September 1, 2023 and terminating December 31, 2028.

Supervisor Peck	aye
Councilman Stewart	aye
Councilman McMahon	aye
Councilman Russell	aye
Councilman Uhlinger	aye

Resolution adopted.

- Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by B. Russell to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.

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Christina Vargulick  
Town Clerk