

**Organization Town of Champion****Board Town Board****Date and Time Monday, May 2 2016 at 7:00 PM****Place Town of Champion Offices Board Room (rear of building) 10 N Broad St, West Carthage NY****Contact [Chris Vargulick](#) Town Clerk Phone (315) 493-3240 Fax(315) 493-2900****Minutes**

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The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, May 2, 2016 at the Town Municipal Office, 10 North Broad Street, West Carthage. Present were Supervisor Ferguson, Councilmen Stewart, Watkins, and Leary, Highway Superintendent Sech and Attorney Farley. Councilman Buzzell was absent.

Supervisor Ferguson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing**

Proof of notice having been furnished, the public hearing on the Local Law #1 for 2016 – a Local Law opting out of the tax exemption provided by Section 487 of the Real Property Tax Law was called to order at 7:01. No one spoke for or against the proposed local law. All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, the public hearing was closed at 7:02pm

Supervisor Ferguson opened the public forum. Linda Garrett, Executive Director of the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust requested that the Board consider a resolution supporting the submission of a proposal by the agency to the NYS Department of Ag & Markets Farmplan Implementation Grants Program to purchase the perpetual easement rights for two hundred thirty two (232) acres of productive agricultural land owned by Jeffrey Sullivan. Supervisor Ferguson asked if the easement complies with Town zoning law. Ms. Garrett responded that the land would be for agricultural uses only. No action was taken.

Diana Harris questioned the use of Bach Road as the point to stop and redirect traffic during a fire call at the Koster property that temporarily closed a section of NYS Route 126. She reported that some drivers had encroached on her lawn.

Frank Koster stated that he reported a fire at his home on May 1, 2016. He used fire extinguishers prior to the arrival of the fire department and then proceeded to the second floor of his home to remove his fire arms. He was overcome by smoke and had to be removed from the structure by fire responders. Mr. Koster questioned why the tanker owned by the former Champion Fire Department is not available for use and speculated whether the West Carthage Fire Department should have paid fire fighters. Supervisor Ferguson and Councilman Leary both expressed their concern regarding the fire incident. Councilman Leary discussed the number of responders and departments that arrived and the recorded response times.

**Monthly Reports**

- Engineer – Supervisor Ferguson reported that the pump in Well #2 on Britton Drive has been replaced. The investigation into the decreased output in Well #1 is proceeding. A four foot (4') section between the well and the hydrant will be excavated.
- Councilmen – Councilman Watkins discussed a presentation made to the Black River Advisory Council meeting by Kathy Amyot. Ms. Amyot reported on the West Carthage Riverbend Park project. Councilman Leary commended the Highway Department for the work they accomplished in the Village Green Park to repair damage done to the lawn.
- Highway – Mr. Sech reported on the activities completed in April including: road side trash removal, brooming intersections, cold patching, grading and rolling gravel roads, closing Taylor Road bridge after it was “red flagged” by NYSDOT, removing plows and sanders, installing a radio in the new mower tractor, preparing the gravel screener, removing trees at South Champion Cemetery, reseeding at the park, maintaining the landscaping at the Town office and preparing for the spring clean up weekends. Supervisor Ferguson asked that a written report be prepared regarding the plan and costs for paving. The Board, by consensus, authorized the Highway Superintendent to purchase and install a removable gate at the entrance to the park to deter vandalism.
- Assessor – Mr. Vargulick reported that change notices have been mailed to affected property owners.
- Justice Court – Judge Quinn reported normal activity.
- Planning Board/ZEO – Mr. LaBarge reported that, due to a lack of business, the Planning Board did not meet. He issued a small number of structure permits.
- Parks/Historian – Mrs. Thornton thanked the Highway Department for restoring the park grounds and wondered if it would be permissible to pursue grant funds for a security camera. The Board agreed by consensus. The Hiram Hubbard House has been awarded funds for a second historical marker. Mrs. Thornton invited the public to a presentation she is giving at the Church of Latter Day Saints in Watertown regarding the settlement of Champion. Mrs. Thornton distributed a rack card illustrating sights of interest in the hamlet of Champion. The card will be available to the public at a number of lodging and tourism venues.
- Circuit Rider – Ms. Amyot reported that she is coordinating a date for a RACOG meeting to discuss a number of issues including the summer swim program and interest by the Village of Deferiet to join RACOG and the

Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Leary to approve the minutes for April 4 and April 14, 2016 as presented. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Watkins to approve payment of the following bills as presented:

General #97-118.....	\$15,402.87
Highway #63-79.....	\$31,087.22
Con WD#1 O&M #8-11.....	\$8,379.01
WD#2,4&5 O&M #21-26.....	\$12,050.03
SD#2 O&M #15-17.....	\$158.49
SD#2 Capital #12.....	\$1,250.19

Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The Supervisor’s monthly report was read and discussed. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Watkins to accept the report as presented. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Supervisor Ferguson reviewed correspondence. A letter was received from Jefferson County Legislator Doldo, Chair of the Radio Ad Hoc Committee, dismissing concerns expressed by the Town regarding the unsuitability of the proposed site for a communication tower. A letter from the Town Board to the County cited concerns about the tower fall zone, danger from falling ice and the negative impact on homes and construction in the vicinity. Motion by Mr. Leary, seconded by Mr. Stewart to inform property owners within the vicinity of the proposed tower site of the County’s intent and to advise them to direct their questions and concern to the County Legislature. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

**New Business**

- The Board reviewed Local Law #1 for 2016. Attorney Farley advised that Section 487 allows the Town to negotiate PILOTs and opting out will require IDA ownership to negotiate an exemption. Supervisor Ferguson stated that a number of local towns and school districts have opted out. He also noted that with a Section 487 exemption there is a sixty (60) day window for the Town to act after notification but no formal process for the notification. Motion by Mr. Ferguson, seconded by Mr. Stewart to adopt Local Law #1 for 2016 - a Local Law opting out of the tax exemption provided by Section 487 of the Real Property Tax Law. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- The Board reviewed a revised outline of understanding from Copenhagen Wind Farm LLC. The revisions remove all reference to a 485b exemption for which the project is not eligible and makes the Town whole for all property, sales and mortgage taxes. The proposed assessment calculation is consistent with state advisories for utility valuations. Mr. Stewart stated that the classification of the line as a “feeder” line is incorrect. The line is a transmission line. Board members concurred with his statement. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Leary to authorize the Supervisor to execute the agreement as revised. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- The Board considered a request from James Uhlinger, Sr. to review the water rates charged to his undeveloped parcels. The review determined that the parcels are located within the boundaries of Water District #4 and that the adopted Champion Water District #4 water law has established a scheduled charge of \$15.00 quarterly flat rate for undeveloped parcels per Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU). Motion by Mr. Leary, seconded by Mr. Stewart to enforce the water law as adopted. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Leary to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.

Christina Vargulick  
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