

The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, February 4, 2019 at the Town Municipal Building, 10 North Broad Street, West Carthage. Present were Supervisor Ferguson, Councilmen Stewart, Watkins, and Waite, and Highway Superintendent Strife. Councilman Buzzell was absent.

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

Supervisor Ferguson opened the public forum. Jennifer Waite questioned liens levied against property owned by her and four other property owners for Bill of Costs assessed by the NYS Supreme Court in the amount of \$1,534.00. She questioned why the petitioners had not been notified directly by the Town. Supervisor Ferguson responded that the Town's legal counsel for the matter filed for the costs as awarded by the Court. J. Waite distributed copies of the Notice of Entry to the Board. Councilman Stewart noted that the attorney for the petitioners was given notice. J. Waite questioned whether all Board members were aware of the liens and they acknowledged they were not. J. Waite acknowledged that the petitioner's legal counsel advised them of the levy approximately one week after filing. Joseph Lawler questioned the Board's actions in regards to the process. Supervisor Ferguson asserted that the Town followed the advice of its legal counsel.

### **Monthly Reports**

- Engineer – Mike Alteri presented a preliminary cost opinion for removal and replacement of the heating oil tank and removal of the gasoline tank at the highway garage. The estimated cost for the base bid is \$58,750. Two alternates for gasoline tank removal and diesel tank canopy are estimated at \$4,000 and \$19,000, respectively. Mr. Waite questioned selling the gas tank out right. Mr. Alteri recommended that the tank be disposed of as part of the project due to NYSDEC regulations and liability issues. Bulk storage for gasoline is no longer necessary. Mr. Alteri noted that the highway department regularly measures the fuel oil so no leaks are suspected. Therefore, soil remediation should be very minimal. Supervisor Ferguson stated that the Board identified the project as a priority during budget deliberations and appropriated funds for the heating oil tank removal and replacement. A decision will be made on the alternate projects based on bidding and unanticipated revenues. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Watkins to authorize Bernier, Carr & Associates to design and bid the highway garage fuel oil and gasoline tank replacement/removal as presented. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Alteri recommended completing the engineering study for a expansion of the sewer service to Champion Heights and the feasibility of serving adjoining areas in the hamlet of Champion for a cost not to exceed \$4,000. The completed study will emphasize health and safety and be used to apply for funding opportunities. Mr. Waite questioned how residents would be surveyed and supported a door-to-door approach rather than public forums. Mr. Stewart questioned if the systems capacity is adequate to support the proposed hospital and district expansion. Mr. Alteri stated the gravity line was enlarged during the last project. Motion by Mr. Watkins, seconded by Mr. Stewart to authorize Bernier, Carr & Associates to complete the engineering study for a sewer district to serve the Champion Heights area and adjoining areas. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

- Councilmen – Mr. Waite stated his disagreement with the bill of costs levied on the five petitioners vs. Town of Champion. Mr. Stewart discussed his attendance at a recognition dinner for retiring justices and thanked Judge Quinn for his service.
- Highway – Superintendent Strife reported on equipment maintenance and road maintenance.

- Assessor – Mr. Vargulick asked to address the Board during executive session regarding litigation. In response to a question, Mr. Vargulick explained an error made by Jefferson County Real Property when they failed to apply special district charges (fire protection) to utilities which affected taxable value and influenced the tax rate. The Town is in discussions with the County to collect and distribute the omitted taxes.
- Planning Board/ZEO – Mr. LaBarge reported that the Planning Board will be considering a minor subdivision for the proposed hospital project and issued one zoning permit.
- Circuit Rider – Mr. Dietrich reported that the next RACOG meeting has not been scheduled to date pending coordinating with the presenter. Mr. Dietrich reported ongoing discussions regarding LED street lighting and a completed RACOG brochure.

Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Waite to approve the minutes for January 7, 2019 as presented. Ayes, 4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Waite, seconded by Mr. Watkins to pay the following bills as presented:

General #19-49.....	\$303,584.53
Highway #8-30.....	\$38,034.55
RACOG #3-4.....	\$700.00
Con WD#1 O&M #3.....	\$12,605.87
WD#2,4&5 O&M #10-14.....	\$6,493.62
SD#1 O&M #2.....	\$61,685.50
SD#2 O&M #4-6.....	\$1,124.24

Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.

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

**New Business**

- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Waite to schedule a special meeting to review the draft employee handbook on February 20, 2019 at 7:00pm. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Supervisor Ferguson to go into executive session for the purposes of discussing personnel and litigation. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried. Executive session began at 8:12pm.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Supervisor Ferguson to return to open session. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried. Open session resumed at 8:36pm.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Watkins to give authority to the Supervisor and Assessor, based on parameters set by the Board, to make decisions in a specific assessment challenge. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Waite to appoint Lydia Young to the vacant position of town justice effective March 1, 2019. Ayes-4, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Supervisor Ferguson to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:39pm.

*Christina Vargulick*  
 Christina Vargulick  
 Town Clerk