

The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, July 5, 2021 at the Town Municipal Building, 10 North Broad Street, West Carthage. Present were Supervisor Ferguson, Councilmen Stewart, Watkins, Waite and Gump and Highway Superintendent Strife.

Supervisor Ferguson called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Ferguson opened the public forum to hear comments regarding the options for marijuana sales and on-site consumption in the Town outside the Village limits. No one from the public addressed the Board on the matter.

Supervisor Ferguson invited comments from the public at large. Diana Harris, representing the Champion Second Methodist Church, requested funding for a number of church maintenance issues including the septic system, doors, foundation repairs and furnace replacement. Brian Peck commended those persons and organizations involved in the July 4<sup>th</sup> Old Home Days including Brian Sech, Lynn Thornton, and the Champion Grange. Jonathan Schell asked if the 1800 Village Green Park is open and accepting reservations. Supervisor Ferguson responded that the park was reopened June 24<sup>th</sup> when the Governor's executive orders were rescinded.

### **Monthly Reports**

- Councilmen – T. Stewart reported on the success of the Old Home Days. L. Waite questioned why West Carthage is charging the Carthage Area Rescue Squad (CARS) \$9,000 annually to house an ambulance at Champion Station. Supervisor Ferguson responded that the village department may charge to defer a portion of the operating expenses for the station which may potentially decrease the cost of fire protection to town residents. M. Gump stated that CARS, unlike the fire department, is paid to respond to calls therefore the charges are reasonable.
- Highway Superintendent – J. Strife reported that the department has been very busy. Switzer, Middle and Van Brocklin Roads have all been paved. Shoulder work was completed with the assistance of the Lewis County Highway Department. Documents have been submitted for CHIPs reimbursement. The Town Highway Department assisted the V/West Carthage with paving. Sand has been drawn and roadside mowing is continuing. The new pickup truck has been delivered.
- Assessor – W. Vargulick was available for questions.
- Planning Board/ZEO – P. LaBarge reported that the Planning Board had approved two minor subdivisions. He also issued a number of permits for the month.
- Circuit Rider – M. Dietrich summarized current Tug Hill Commission initiatives.

Motion by H. Watkins, seconded by T. Stewart to approve the minutes of June 7, 2021 as presented. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by M. Gump to pay the following bills as presented:

General #175-204.....	\$47,800.48
Highway #84-100.....	\$292,271.70
RACOG #9-12.....	\$476.75
ConWD#1 O&M #12.....	\$347.75
WD#2,4&5 O&M #43-50.....	\$3,627.54
SD#2 O&M #24-27.....	\$8,404.58

Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

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

Board members received the monthly revenue/expenditure report for their review and comment.

Supervisor Ferguson reported that the Town completed the request for ARPA Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds and based on the budget the town is eligible for a total ARPA payment of \$242,496, of which half will be paid this summer and half in the summer of 2022. Supervisor Ferguson referred to the list of priorities previously submitted by Councilmen Stewart and Gump and himself and the V/West Carthage Fire Department. He requested that board members let him know if they have other recommendations they think should be considered and individually prioritize the list for discussion by the Board.

Supervisor Ferguson reported that the community solar webinars were held and are available for viewing on the town website together with the web address to enroll. He reported that the Town electric accounts have been enrolled with an estimated savings of \$1,408.00/annually. The anticipated timeline for the solar credits to be applied for the town is May 2022 since the credits are based on the availability of solar projects that are producing power.

Supervisor Ferguson advised members that the delayed Agreed Upon Procedures financial review for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020 by Stackel & Navarra is proceeding.

### **New Business**

- Board members reviewed a letter of support for Missing Links Snowmobile Club's application for a TEA-21 Recreational Trails Grant to purchase a new Tucker Sno-Cat 2000 rubber track trail groomer with trail paver drags. Motion by L. Waite, seconded by T. Stewart to authorize the letter of support for Missing Links Snowmobile Club's grant application. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Resolution offered by Councilman Stewart; seconded by Councilman Watkins:

WHEREAS, the Town of Champion supports an application for a Department of Defense Infrastructure Program Grant to provide needed infrastructure to support the construction of the new Carthage Area Hospital Facility and adjacent lots for future development;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Champion Town Board authorizes Town to act a Co-Applicant with the Carthage Area Hospital, and;

FURTHERMORE, authorizes the Town Supervisor to sign any documents required to submit the application.

Supervisor Ferguson	aye
Councilman Stewart	aye
Councilman Watkins	aye
Councilman Waite	aye
Councilman Gump	aye

Resolution adopted.

- Board members expressed their positions regarding authorizing the sale of marijuana in the Town of Champion outside the Village limits.

Supervisor Ferguson stated that the Town of Champion is a highly residential community and therefore he opposes the establishment of marijuana dispensaries.

Councilman Watkins felt that due to the burden of regulations that the Town should opt out.

Councilman Gump stated that he had conducted his own poll of forty (40) voters.

Of those persons he questioned, eight (8) chose opt-out; nine (9) didn't care; and twenty-three (23) chose opt-in. He stated that the state will regulate and that it would be a safer source of marijuana.

Councilman Stewart stated that he opposes the use of drugs and chooses to opt-out of marijuana sales.

Councilmen Waite stated that employers have significant difficulties in hiring employees who can pass a drug test already. The legal sale of marijuana is going to make the problem worse. He commented that impaired drivers can be tested for alcohol but that there is not test for marijuana. He supported opting-out.

Motion by Supervisor Ferguson, seconded by Councilman Stewart to have the Town Attorney prepare a local law to opt-out of the sale of marijuana and on-site consumption in the Town outside the Village limits. Ayes-4, Nays-1 (M. Gump). Motion carried.

Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by Supervisor Ferguson to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:47pm.

*Christina Vargulick*

Christina Vargulick  
Town Clerk