

**Danby Town Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting
November 19, 2018, 7pm, Danby Town Hall**

Present:

Councilpersons: Ric Dietrich (Supervisor), Leslie Connors, Jim Holahan, Jack Miller, Matt Ulinski

Others Present:

Town Clerk	Pamela Goddard
Planning	CJ Randall
Bookkeeper	Laura Shawley
Legislator	Dan Klein
Public	Ted Crane, Ronda Roaring, Pat Woodworth,

Meeting Opened at 7:02 pm

Privilege of the Floor

Pat Woodworth spoke regarding the discussion held at the previous meeting of whether minutes should be marked “draft” prior to approval by the Town Board. She noted that these are the responsibility of the Town Clerk and that there is no tradition in the Town, nor requirement in NY law, that they be marked “draft.” As there is almost never a change, Woodworth questioned why this matters and what need there is to create another step in the process of making minutes public. She thought that further discussion would be a waste of time.

Ted Crane supported Woodworth’s comments. He also thought that such a small thing did not merit further discussion.

EV Connect Tompkins - short report

Jim Holahan made a short report of a presentation by EV Tompkins. The Town of Ulysses electric vehicle charging station has active use. Holahan reported that proper signage is valuable, for letting drivers know that these are available. There was also a recommendation that electric vehicle infrastructure be included in municipal comprehensive plans. There was a brief discussion regarding options for effective public information regarding the location of charging station.

Danby Municipal Audit

Bookkeeper Laura Shawley made a report. Informal quotes have been received from accounting firms related to a financial audit of the Town of Danby accounts. An audit of the Town Clerk’s office was done in 2010. The last full audit of the Town was done in 2006. Insero & Co. is the new name of the firm that did the 2006 and 2010 audits. The upcoming audit will be of the 2017 books of all branches of Danby’s municipal records: General Fund, Highway Fund, Water District Fund, and all departments including tax collection and the court.

Shawley reported that the person who did the previous Danby audits is still with this firm. The records of the earlier audits may help to keep costs down on the upcoming audit. Shawley presented a resolution of approval for the Board’s consideration. If approved, the audit will begin during the week starting December 10, 2018.

RESOLUTION NO. 69 OF 2018 - APPROVAL FROM THE TOWN BOARD TO CONTRACT WITH INSERTO & CO. TO PERFORM AN AUDIT OF THE 2017 BOOKS

Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Danby gives permission to the Town Supervisor to contract with Inserto & Co. to perform an audit of the 2017 books. The cost for this service will not exceed \$9,000 and this fee will be paid out of the fund balance in the general fund.

Moved by Connors, Second by Ulinski. The motion passed.

In Favor: Connors, Holahan, Miller, Ulinski, Dietrich

Zoning Audit

Planner CJ Randall provided information on preliminary audit of the Town of Danby Zoning Ordinance. The audit was based on questions compiled by Randall from various planning resources and NYS municipal support sources and reviewed by the Planning Board during meetings over the past several months. Randall provided the preliminary draft of the zoning audit to the Town Board. The PB held an extra meeting in November, in order to make progress on review of the document but another was rescheduled due to weather. The PB came to a handful of conclusions, with recommendations outlined below.

The Planning Board recommends the following actions, to be considered for the 2019 Planning and Zoning Work Plan:

1. Review and differentiate zones across a broader gradient. The density is flat throughout the Town; that is, the current Low Density Residential (LDR) Zone does not reflect the desire for actual low density.
2. Add environmental protection overlay zones, perhaps an agriculture-only overlay zone, based on the Natural Resources Inventory.
3. Develop Future Land Use Map.
4. Inventory all uses and review all definitions.
5. Consider whether each use should be subject to Special Permitting, Site Plan Review, or allowed by right.
6. Add more differentiation in Ag uses; add language regulating CAFOs, animal waste storage facilities, and wineries, ciders, distilleries and any other Ag uses open to the public.
7. Conduct water & wastewater feasibility study for the Central Hamlet.
8. Make administrative edits to make the Zoning Ordinance easier to use for the Code Enforcement Officer.

Randall explained each of these recommendations. Randall asked the TB to review the zoning audit and recommendations and send responses to Randall. Further discussion about the 2019 scope of work will take place during the December Town Board meetings.

Joint Boards Meeting

There was a discussion regarding when to hold a joint board meeting involving the Town Board, Planning Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Conservation Advisory Council. In recent years, this has been an annual meeting to help plan a comprehensive scope of work for the Town of Danby. Clerk Goddard recommended that the meeting for the 2019 scope of work be held in mid-January or early February, after new Board appointments have been made.

There was agreement to hold this meeting sometime in the beginning of 2019.

Legislator's Report

Dan Klein reported that the County budget is complete. That budget includes \$5,000 for a full-time youth program manager in Danby. Those funds are to be matched by the Town. The County budget also includes funds for infrastructure improvements in parks and for trails, up to \$5,000 per town. Dietrich raised the question of whether funds might be available to connect the Jennings Pond trail with the Finger Lakes trail.

Klein reported on assessment exemptions, in particular an existing partial assessment exemption for the low income disabled and seniors. Klein reported that the income level for "low income" had not been raised in ten years. The Legislature is researching raising that income level as much as 3%. Klein additionally informed the Board that local municipalities may adopt a local property tax exemption in addition to the county property tax exemption for low income disabled and seniors. Some Towns already do this. Clerk Goddard offered to research the process.

The Coddington Road closure will end, temporarily. A section of the road has been closed, for major improvements, for much of the Fall. The road will reopen in time for Thanksgiving and will be open all through the winter. Additional work requiring closure will resume in the Spring. Holahan reported that the road still needs a lot of work, but is passable.

Klein reported that several topics of keen public interest before the Legislature. There will be a vote on a resolution to not allow gas power for the power plant. The Legislature is considering a resolution urging legalization of recreational marijuana in NYS. An office of Veteran's services is scheduled to open in the County in 2019, with one full time position charged with helping veterans find the services available to them.

Agenda/meeting procedures

Supervisor Dietrich opened a discussion regarding improving procedures for setting agendas and making related documents available to the public. Dietrich noted that, in several recent cases, "we could have done better."

Connors made a suggestion that it might be helpful for a representative from the Association of Towns to come to Danby and make a presentation, to all boards, regarding best practices. Ulinski agreed that it would be good for the Town to review best practices for running meetings. There was a discussion regarding whether to have this as part of the Joint Boards meeting, or at another time. Dietrich suggested that the Joint Boards meeting be focused on the annual scope of work. Ulinski offered to contact a presenter from the Association of Towns, who had presented at the "Newly Elected Officials" school.

Highway Superintendent Referendum

There was a brief discussion of the results of the referendum. Of 1,669 ballots cast, 1,580 voted on the Danby proposition as to whether the Highway Superintendent should be made an appointed position. There were 741 votes for "yes" and 839 votes for "no." Therefore, the Highway Superintendent remains an elected position.

Supervisor Dietrich outlined the various options available to the Town. These included passing a resolution allowing a Superintendent to live outside the boundaries of Danby, bringing the question to a referendum at another time, or doing nothing at this time. A brief discussion of these options and next steps ensued. Dietrich advocated for taking time to think about the options, stating that there is not a time pressure at this time. Others agreed that this would be a good time for additional information gathering, particularly in regards what has been working in other Towns.

No action was to be taken at this time, pending additional research.

Planning Report

Planner Randall reported on various topics. Danby was awarded three “no match” grants for road projects by Bridge NY, for road projects. Close to a half million dollars was awarded for work on Jersey Hill Road, Gunderman Road, and Bruce Hill Road. This will allow the Bruce Hill culvert to be joined with the Brown Road stream bank stabilization project. All these projects will move forward in the next year.

A Planning Board recommendation regarding the requested rezoning of the White Hawk EcoVillage planned development zone (PDZ), is to be part of the PB meeting on November 29. This meeting was rescheduled, due to a winter storm, from November 15. Following this recommendation, Randall will be bringing a draft local law, rezoning the PDZ. Tompkins County Planning is currently reviewing the proposal. A public hearing for that LL will need to be scheduled.

Randall reported on several planning meetings attended, including meetings related to county tourism, flood resiliency, and a project meeting with participants in the Brown Road stream stabilization. The NYS DEC has determined that the culvert does not need to be an aquatic passage. Various design options are being negotiated between the project partners.

Year End Financial Meeting

There was a brief discussion regarding whether the need for an additional, year-end financial meeting in December. Clerk Goddard noted that she would be unavailable, due to the year-end holidays, from December 24 through December 31. Bookkeeper Shawley estimated that much of the needed year-end financial balancing of budget lines could be done at the second December meeting, on December 17. Any additional budget adjustments can be made at the first meetings in January 2019.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Pamela Goddard, Town Clerk