

MINUTES OF TOWN BOARD MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

A work session meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Lewisboro, Westchester County, New York, was held on September 27, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. at the at the Lewisboro Library, 15 Main Street, South Salem, New York.

PRESENT:

Supervisor	Peter Parsons
Council Members	Jane Crimmins, Tony Gonçalves, Richard Sklarin, Daniel Welsh
Town Clerk	Janet Donohue
Absent	None

Also attending was the Attorney for the Town Gregory Folchetti, Facilities Maintenance Manager Joel Smith, Maintenance Assistant Shawn Johannessen, Confidential Secretary/Benefits Coordinator Mary Hafter, Highway Superintendent Peter Ripperger, Comptroller Leo Masterson and Police Chief David Alfano.

Approximately 11 residents/observers attended the live meeting and approximately 32 participated via Zoom.

Supervisor Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

Supervisor Parsons noted the exits to be used in the event of an emergency.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

COMMUNICATIONS

Supervisor Parsons stated the following:

The overwhelming consensus is that strict discipline needs to be observed in Board Meetings so I will ask that:

- 1. The Board members only answer questions and comments from the audience during the Polling of the Board section of the meeting.*
- 2. I plan to enforce silence by residents except during Public Hearings and Public Comment periods.*
- 3. If someone in the audience breaks this rule then, if the individual does not heed the chair, I will ask a police officer to escort that individual from the room.*
- 4. Please do not go on Zoom while you are in this room as it destroys our capabilities of recording the meeting.*
- 5. Please no yielding of your time to anyone else.*

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COVID-19 – Updates

Supervisor Parsons stated the Town of Lewisboro's Covid numbers have decreased from 35 to 34, Pound Ridge went from 3 to 9, Bedford went from 35 to 19, North Salem went from 3 to 4 and Somers went from 75 to 42.

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES - Approved

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Gonçalves, the Board voted 5-0 to approve meeting minutes of August 23, 2021, 2021.

THE VOTE:	Yes	- Crimmins, Gonçalves, Parsons, Sklarin, Welsh	(5)
	No	- None	(0)
	Absent	- None	(0)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Westchester County Legislator Kitley Covill (7:36 – 7:55 p.m.)

County Legislator for District #2, Kitley Covill, gave a legislative update. Ms. Covill thanked the Board members and apologized for not giving her yearly update in 2020 due to Covid.

Ms. Covill started by saying that four years ago, Ward Pound Ridge Reservation had plywood on their windows and the lean-tus were in terrible disrepair. She's happy to report that now all has been updated including covered bridges, new lean-tus and the plywood is gone.

Playland is going to be run by a private entity, however, the county has put a lot of money into it as well and it is a wonderful place to visit with new rides and new restaurants. She urged all to visit.

Ms. Covill also stated that the housing settlement has now been settled however more housing is needed. Lewisboro has a lot of aging residents, and she urged the Board to look at additional housing for them.

Co-op legislation has been updated where the Boards of co-ops had to explain why applicants were rejected. The applications have now been updated where the Boards have to explain why an applicant was rejected.

Human Rights Law was updated to include anti-discrimination based on threats and if you were in a perceived group of individuals.

Food scrapping has been added to the solid waste haulers to just do food hauling.

Bedford has Merestead Park where the meadows have been created and the outside of the building has been re-furbished.

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New York State office of legal council stated that legal aid could no longer be the administrator for 18 B lawyers (these are attorneys who show up in family court or criminal misdemeanor court for people who cannot afford an attorney). Westchester County will now have to fund an office of legal council by sometime in 2022.

There will also be a new ethics code for employees on this year's ballot.

LGBTQ now has an advisory board which was greeted with much joy.

The Veteran's exemption has now been increased from \$50,000 to \$75,000. Increasing the volunteer fireman and volunteer ambulance will probably be increased down the road.

During the Police Reform requirements, it was heard that mental health was worrisome. The County has made a 5-point plan. One of those items is that all dispatchers will be trained on whether a call is mental health related or a joint mental health call. In addition, there was only one emergency response mobile crisis team located down county and now that number has been increased to 8, one of which will be based in Mount Kisco.

Mr. Covill also urged all municipalities to create a form for residents to fill out who may have an autistic child to file with the police departments alerting them that there is someone in the home who may not want to be touched or may have an issue with their presence.

Ms. Covill asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. Supervisor Parsons asked if the town would be able to share space on the emergency tower in Mountain Lakes Camp. Ms. Covill said that they discussed this before and the pole would have to be extended by 30 feet, but the problem is park alienation rules which is a long process.

Mr. Welsh asked about the new solid waste food scrapping haulers and our non-relationship with the county's solid waste district. Ms. Covill stated that this district was created years ago and Lewisboro, along with other northern towns, did not become part of that. The county is not paying the bills for this, but rather the district itself. To create a new district now would be very costly.

Ms. Crimmins thanked Ms. Covill for her work. She also mentioned the new pride mural at Playland and a local resident who is on the LGBTQ advisory board.

Mr. Sklarin asked if the mobile crisis teams were up and running yet but the answer was no, however it should be soon. There is also a lack of social workers.

The Board thanked Ms. Covill for all of her work during the last four years.

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VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Update

Veterans Advisory Committee Chairperson John Lemke gave an update on the Veterans Committee. He stated that a Veteran's Dinner will be held on Tuesday, September 28th at the Town Park Pavilion (re-scheduled due to weather) and it is sponsored by the Lewisboro Lions.

The flagpole was installed at Onatru and the official flag raising was done the morning of the Library Fair. The Vista Scouts raised the flag for the first time. And the Vista Fire Department donated most of the funds for the flagpole. Mr. Lemke thanked all involved.

Mr. Lemke also stated that their acronym is the same as Lewisboro Volunteer Ambulance Corp and feels it should be changed. Supervisor Parsons suggested Veterans of Lewisboro.

Plans are also under way for a Veteran's Day event and more information will follow. The Board thanked Mr. Lemke.

ONATRU FARM PARK – Authorize Fundraiser for MPES Halloween Spooktacular

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Sklarin, the Board voted as follows:

THE VOTE:	Yes	- Parsons, Crimmins, Gonçalves, Sklarin, Welsh	(5)
	No	- None	(0)
	Absent	- None	(0)

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the use of Onatru Farm for the Meadow Pond Elementary School Halloween Spooktacular on October 29, 2021, and to waive any fees.

TOWN PARK – Authorize Repairs to Ball Field (8:01– 8:08 p.m.)

Jim Moreo, the Lewisboro Baseball Association President would like approval to make repairs to existing structures at the Lewisboro Town Park baseball area with a very generous donation made to the LBA from the Arthur J. Vouté Family. Mr. Moreo thanked resident and active member of the LBA, Bill Bongiorno who worked closely with the family to obtain this generous donation of \$100,000. He also thanked his LBA predecessors Carmen Ciccone and Adam Giardina. Mr. Moreo also stated they would like to add donor signage. Supervisor Parsons stated that he would like the signage to be similar to the Leon Levy Preserve sign that is located on the right. He also suggested he speak with Parks & Recreation Superintendent, Dana Mayclim about the sign at Onatru by the soccer field on the left.

The Board thanked Mr. Moreo, Mr. Bongiorno and the entire Vouté family.

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On motion by Mr. Welsh, seconded by Ms. Crimmins, the Board voted as follows:

THE VOTE:	Yes	- Parsons, Crimmins, Gonçalves, Sklarin, Welsh	(5)
	No	- None	(0)
	Absent	- None	(0)

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the Lewisboro Baseball Association's request to perform repairs at the Town Park baseball field and to add donor signage with the Architectural & Community Appearance Review Council (ACARC) fees waived.

HIGHWAY – Budget Discussion (8:08– 8:47 p.m.)

Highway Superintendent Peter Ripperger presented his initial budget requests for 2022. They do not include any union negotiations for salaries, so they show the current salaries. Mr. Ripperger would like to hire another person that would spend 50% of their time as a mechanic and 50% of the time driving so, they would need their Commercial Driver's (CDL) license. Highway used to have 14 employees but now have 9; 10 when you count the mechanic. Many of the employees have worked for the town so long that they have about 5 weeks' vacation. Mr. Ripperger has outsourced but feels that it is cheaper to keep it in house. This would have to be approved by the Union and Civil Service.

Mr. Welsh asked if Mr. Ripperger looked at what other towns are doing, such as Pound Ridge and North Salem and the answer was yes. North Salem has about 65 miles of roads where Lewisboro has about 96. North Salem is also responsible for cemeteries and parks. They also do county roads in the winter but get reimbursed for this expense. Somers has about 59 miles of roads. Our town has several dirt roads which is very time consuming and costly. Bedford has a crew that just works on dirt roads.

Mr. Ripperger also stated that he is putting a line in for mulch removal this year in the amount of \$55,000. This is the mulch that is sitting at the salt dome. If they do find another vendor that will take it away at no charge, then this line will come out of the budget.

Supervisor Parsons asked about reflecting the savings if another mechanic is obtained. Mr. Ripperger has put in some savings; however, Supervisor Parsons feels it should be more. The repair line is currently \$116,000.

Mr. Ripperger stated that this year there will be no bonding for road resurfacing and paving. He suggested that the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) will be about \$170,000. Town Comptroller, Leo Masterson explained that this money has to be spent in order for the town to get reimbursed and there is a time delay.

Mr. Crimmins asked if the Highway Department was still following the Cornell program. Mr. Ripperger stated that it was on hold due to COVID. Supervisor Parsons feels that it is a very good program. The current report is 8 years old.

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Mr. Sklarin stated that he felt that the snow removal has been very good in the last recent years. Mr. Ripperger stated that everything on the new trucks for salt are computerized and use less salt. Mr. Ripperger also stated that they bought up salt at the end of last year when it was cheaper. The salt prices went up \$16.70 per ton.

The Board thanked Mr. Ripperger.

POLICE – Budget Discussion (8:48– 8:59 p.m.)

Supervisor Parsons stated that Chief Alfano has made major progress on the police reform initiatives, and he thanked him for that effort.

Chief of Police David Alfano presented his budget requests for 2022. They do not include any union negotiations for salaries, so they show the current salaries. Officer Training will go up by \$12,500 due to the police reform implementations. This training includes domestic violence, implicit bias, firearms, taser, article 35, which is the use of deadly physical force, mental health crisis intervention familiarization, de-escalation training. There is the workplace violence training, blood borne pathogens, hazard communications training, sexual harassment training, uniform and service training which includes hands on tactics, just to mention a few of the ongoing training that will take place.

Chief Alfano also stated that the gasoline line will increase by approximately \$10,000 and this is due to always having an extra car on the road and the increase in gasoline pricing.

Chief Alfano stated that the firearms and camera recording line will increase significantly this year due to body cameras being purchased and the increase in the cost of firearms, increasing the line by \$21,000.

The Board thanked Chief Alfano.

MAINTENANCE – Budget Discussion (9:00– 9:14 p.m.)

Facilities Maintenance Manager Joel Smith presented his budget requests for 2022. They do not include any union negotiations for salaries, so they show the current salaries.

Mr. Smith stated that his overtime line would increase by approximately \$13,500 and this is due mainly to the daily Covid disinfection that needs to be done on a daily basis before the employees arrive.

The facilities maintenance line went up by \$3,000 and that is due to interior upgrades to the Cyrus Russell Community House to include a new floor, cabinets, and a new stove. Mr. Smith explained that the town may get reimbursed by the cell tower monies.

Mr. Smith stated that the technical services will increase. The video taping line will increase by \$2,600 and the licensing fee line will increase by \$6,000.

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Mr. Smith stated that the cemetery line will increase by \$2,500 for the rock wall clearing. He also increased the tree work line by \$300. Mr. Smith also stated that there is a project that he would like to do in the cemetery which is the salt dome separation project. He would also like to pave the circle and entrance of Onatru Farm along with the Cyrus Russell Community House parking lot.

The Board thanked Mr. Smith.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (9:15 – 9:32 p.m.)

There was a total of seven residents who spoke during the public comment period.

VOUTÉ DONATION TO LEWISBORO BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

Bill Bongiorno stated that he was very grateful to Roseann Vouté and her family for making a very generous donation of \$100,000 to the Lewisboro Baseball Association so that many improvements can be made at the Town Park baseball field. Mr. Bongiorno is honored to be shepherding this project and he thanked the Vouté family.

MASK MANDATE

Two residents spoke out against continuing the mask mandate. They feel that businesses are struggling enough, and it is an undue burden. A resident stated that the Board said they planned on polling the business owners and she was wondering if that had ever been done. It was also pointed out that the Supervisor had taken off his mask to speak and never put it back on. One resident stated that he was pleased with the continuation of the mask mandate.

LIBRARY FAIR

It was stated that the library fair was amazing this year and very well attended. It was great to see the community come together.

VETERANS BANNERS

A resident asked how to purchase additional Veteran's banners.

AGENDA PACKET

A resident questioned why all the budget figures were not placed on the website as part of the agenda packet.

SALT DOME

Two residents stated that they feel that there is a lack of urgency with the mulch pile that is over at the salt dome. They worry about it catching on fire or falling over since it is so high and hurting someone. They feel that the mulch pile is creating liability and environmental issues.

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CORNELL ROADS PROGRAM

A resident feels that when the Cornell guide was done about 8 years ago, it should still be used as a benchmark and guide and be managed in a meaningful way.

CLAIMS – Authorized for Payment

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Welsh, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize payment of the Town's bills in the amount of \$207,309.82.

MEETING – Date Set

An upcoming meeting of the Town Board will include a meeting on Tuesday, October 12, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lewisboro Courtroom, 79 Bouton Road, South Salem, New York.

POLLING OF BOARD AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (9:32 – 9:46 p.m.)

SURVEYS

Ms. Crimmins stated there are currently two surveys of note that they are asking residents to complete and they are Antenna Advisory Board and Comprehensive Master Plan surveys which can be found on the town's website.

ELECTRONIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Mr. Welsh stated that unfortunately the funding for the charging stations has been depleted but he is hoping for more funding to be available in the future. The program is on pause for now.

PARKS & RECREATION – Updates

Mr. Gonçalves gave a Park & Recreation update which included a flu shot reminder for seniors, a Tea Party in the Onatru Garden, a car show at the Town Park, an Octoberfest hosted by the Lewisboro Playground group, the "fall" new neighbor network, and Trunk or Treat. All information can be found on the Parks and Recreation website or by calling them at 914-232-6162.

VETERANS BANNERS

Mr. Gonçalves stated that all the Veterans banners are back up at the shopping centers and thanked the maintenance department.

LIBRARY FAIR

The Board stated that the library fair was great and seemed to be a large success.

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COVID 19 WORKING GROUP

Mr. Gonçalves stated that the Emergency Management Group met and would like to create an ongoing Covid 19 Working Group. If anyone is interested or for more information, please email vfdcommish@aol.com. Their hope is to expand this beyond Covid 19 for any future health issues.

GRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Sklarin stated that they are still looking for Grant Advisory Committee members. If anyone is interested, they can forward their letter of interest and resumé to the town.

VOUTÉ LEGACY

The Board thanked the Vouté Family for their very generous donation to the town.

SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT – Softball Fundraiser

Mr. Sklarin said that the softball fundraiser was successful and raised money for the Community Center of Northern Westchester. Mr. Sklarin also thanked the Horse and Hound for cooking at the event.

LEWISBORO COMMONS

Mr. Sklarin stated he received an email from Lewisboro Commons stating that they will be sending the \$15,000 within the next few weeks as a down payment on the \$50,000 improvement pledge that was promised to Goldens Bridge.

MASK MANDATE

Mr. Sklarin does feel that having a mask on is better than having a mask off and that it does have value. He learned that Ridgefield has lifted their mask mandate for unvaccinated individuals and that we should re-look at our mandate.

FREE MULCH

Mr. Sklarin stated that Peter Cipriano offered to donate his loader to help residents take some free mulch from the salt dome on October 9th from 10 am – 2 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – To Discuss Personnel Issues

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Welsh, the Board voted 5-0 to go into executive session at 9:48 p.m. to discuss personnel issues.

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Gonçalves, the Board voted 5-0 to come out of executive session at 11:00 p.m.

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ANTENNA ADVISORY BOARD – Appointment of Member

On motion by Mr. Sklarin, seconded by Mr. Gonçalves, the Board voted as follows:

THE VOTE:	Yes	- Parsons, Crimmins, Gonçalves, Sklarin, Welsh	(5)
	No	- None	(0)
	Absent	- None	(0)

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board authorizes the appointment of Lynne Geaney to the Antenna Advisory Board for a 5-year term ending 12/31/2025.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL – Appointment of Member

On motion by Mr. Sklarin, seconded by Mr. Welsh, the Board voted as follows:

THE VOTE:	Yes	- Parsons, Crimmins, Gonçalves, Sklarin, Welsh	(5)
	No	- None	(0)
	Absent	- None	(0)

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board authorizes the appointment of Sarah E. Cocco to the Conservation Advisory Council for a 2-year term ending 12/31/2022.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Supervisor Parsons, seconded by Mr. Sklarin, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 11:05 p.m.

Janet L. Donohue
Town Clerk