

A Town Board work session meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Lewisboro, Westchester County, New York, was held on December 18, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lewisboro Town House, 11 Main Street, South Salem, New York.

**PRESENT:**

Supervisor	Tony Gonçalves
Council Members	Andrea Rendo, Mary Shah, Richard Sklarin, Daniel Welsh
Town Clerk	Janet L. Donohue
Absent	None

Also attending was the Attorney for the Town Gregory Folchetti, Maintenance Employees Shawn Johannessen and Joel Smith, and Chief of Staff Kerri Wolfe.

Approximately 14 residents/observers attended the live meeting and approximately 31 participated via Zoom.

Supervisor Gonçalves called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

Supervisor Gonçalves 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**

There were no communications.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MINUTES & REPORTS** - Approved

On motion by Councilman Sklarin, seconded by Councilwoman Shah, the minutes of the November 27, 2023, Town Board meeting and the monthly November Building & Police Reports were approved and filed.

**WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS** - (7:32 – 8:24 p.m.)

Supervisor Gonçalves shared a presentation on the ARPA funds that the town received due to Covid. (see attached).

The total ARPA funds that were received are \$1,284,304 and to date \$350,000 has been spent on the town park playground and \$401,158 was reserved at the 2/27/23 town board meeting to be used for pool equipment, baseball backstops, Onatru bathroom updates, town park shed, maintenance shop barn roof, 3 generators and the employee handbook.

The Board spoke about different projects such as a new bathhouse at the town park pool, a second well at the town park, pickleball courts at the town park, paving, etc. that would utilize the rest of the \$533,146 ARPA funds.

Supervisor Gonçalves suggested that each Board member put which projects they would like to see completed in their order of preference and this will be discussed at a meeting in February.

#### CEMETERY – Transfer of Ownership

On motion by Councilman Sklarin, seconded by Councilwoman Rendo, the Board voted as follows:

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

#### RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board does hereby approve the transfer of Graves #4 and #5 in Plot 182 in the South Salem Cemetery Section C from Vern C. Hayden and Oksana Makarenko to Roseanne Vouté.

#### PERMA WORKERS COMPENSATION – Authorize Renewal

On motion by Councilman Sklarin, seconded by Councilwoman Shah, the Board voted as follows:

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

#### RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board does authorize the two-year renewal of the workers compensation insurance through PERMA, as recommended by the Town Comptroller.

#### ONATRU MAINTENANCE ROOF – Accept Bid

On motion by Councilwoman Shah, seconded by Councilwoman Rendo, the Board voted as follows:

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

#### RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board does accept the lowest bid from M & D Roofing for the Onatru Maintenance Garage roof project, totaling \$42,000.00.

INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR EV CHARGING STATIONS – Authorize Supervisor to Sign

On motion by Councilwoman Shah, seconded by Councilwoman Rendo, the Board voted as follows:

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

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board authorizes the entry into an intermunicipal agreement with the County of Westchester for assistance in the funding of the construction of electric vehicle charging stations and authorizing Supervisor to execute.

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN – Zoning Amendments

On motion by Councilwoman Shah, seconded by Councilwoman Rendo, the Board voted as follows:

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

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board authorizes the Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee to allocate the \$20,000 Greenway Grant towards the suggested additional Zoning Code clean-up/amendments.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD I

A total of 15 residents spoke during the public comment period.

CANNABIS RETAIL

A resident suggested that a Cannabis retail shop open in the old Bank of America location at the Goldens Bridge shopping center. He stated that we have no commercial base here and this would provide tax dollars to the town, and he also feels that this is no different from going into a liquor store. He would like the issue revisited.

Another resident stated that we should not go down this rabbit hole again. This was discussed back on July 12, 2021, and it was voted down. There could have been a permissive referendum, however there were not enough signatures.

RIDGEFIELD AVENUE

A resident who has lived on Ridgefield Avenue for just over one year stated that many people use this road as a cut through and are not following the speed limit of 25 mph. He sent an email to both the Town Board and the Police Chief. Supervisor Gonçalves will respond to his email.

ISRAELI – HAMAS CONFLICT

Approximately 6 residents spoke out against Councilman/Deputy Supervisor Welsh and criticized him for what they feel are antisemitic posts on his personal Facebook page and that those comments are causing distress and discomfort among residents. A resident stated that a petition with over 250 signatures has been circulating in town asking for Councilman Welsh to resign. Others urged the Supervisor not to appoint Councilman Welsh as the Deputy Supervisor.

Approximately 3 residents spoke out in favor of Councilman Welsh stating that they don't believe he is anti-Semitic but rather anti-war. One resident stated that he sees both sides after discussing it with his family and a teacher stated that Councilman Welsh should keep his opinions to himself and not put it out on social media, just as the teachers are advised to do.

During polling of the Board, each Board member addressed the audience. Councilman Welsh stated that the act of criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic and that his focus is on stopping the war. Councilwoman Shah condemns all antisemitism or any other hate speech. She personally does not agree with what Councilman Welsh said or how he said it. Councilwoman Rendo stated that you either stand with Israel or you don't and as a country she feels that we should. She feels there is divisiveness again in our community. She ran for a local town board office to handle town issues and not national issues. Councilman Sklarin stated his job is to represent all the residents. He read part of a press release that was sent out by 63 NY State legislatures on October 20, 2023 stating that they are standing united with Israel. Councilman Sklarin appreciated what everyone said and feels that it is a personal decision as to whether Councilman Welsh resigns. He stated that Councilman Welsh has not apologized to the community about his words, but rather he has been silent. Councilman Sklarin feels that it has been a failure of leadership and he feels that it is appropriate that Councilman Welsh should not be reappointed as the Deputy Town Supervisor moving forward and he also feels that Councilman Welsh has knowingly caused hurt against people. Supervisor Gonçalves stated that they are told not to get involved with international issues on a local level, however they need to figure out how to move forward. He does feel that Hamas is the issue and they do need to be eradicated and the world leaders need to figure this out.

BOND REFERENDUM

A resident asked if the bond referendum for the sidewalks and bike lanes that was on the November 7<sup>th</sup> ballot passed or not. She has reached out to several elected officials and the Board of Elections and cannot get a straight answer.

During polling of the board Supervisor Gonçalves stated that the final results for some towns have not been finalized, however the Town of Lewisboro has and the referendum was voted down by 37 votes.

ARPA FUNDS

A resident suggested that the roads and a senior center should be discussed during ARPA funds discussions.

During polling of the board Supervisor Gonçalves stated that he met with the Seniors, and it looks like they may have a location that they agreed to at 79 Bouton Road.

EV CHARGING STATION IN GOLDENS BRIDGE SHOPPING CENTER

A resident stated that she was happy to see that the EV chargers had been turned down in the Goldens Bridge Shopping Center.

MERCEDES BENZ STORMWATER ISSUES

A resident stated that for 38 years she has lived by Mercedes Benz in Goldens Bridge and has had several issues with flooding and now that more work is being done, there is even more flooding.

During polling of the board Supervisor Gonçalves stated that he met with the resident this morning along with the Building Inspector and it was a stormwater issue that will get fixed.

TOWN EMPLOYEE

A long-time employee, Edward F. Faryniarz, 87, of South Salem, died peacefully on Thursday, December 7, 2023. Ed first worked for the town in September 1961. He retired nearly 34 years later in July 1995. He continued to work for the town part-time, as recently as February of this year.

INAGURATION

The inauguration will take place on January 1, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. at the Lewisboro Library.

CLAIMS – Authorized for Payment

On motion by Councilman Sklarin, seconded by Councilwoman Shah, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize payment of the Town's bills in the amount of \$206,969.52 and \$83,380.17.

POLLING OF THE BOARD

GO FUND ME PAGE FOR BIDDLE FIRE

There is a go fund me page set up for the Biddle Family who had a house fire.

POWER OUTAGE DUE TO STORM

Supervisor Gonçalves stated that Lewisboro, Pound Ridge and Patterson were the hardest hit during this last storm. There were 50 mph winds, and 18 utility poles were broken. This evening the town is down to 14 residents without power.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PHONE NUMBER

Councilwoman Shah stated the Emergency Management phone number was activated in case anyone needed assistance and that phone number is 914-977-8043. Residents can also sign up for NYAlert.gov.

MEETINGS – Dates Set

There will be an Organizational and regular meeting on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. at the Town House, 11 Main Street, South Salem, New York.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – To Conduct an Interview

On motion by Supervisor Gonçalves, seconded by Councilman Sklarin, the Board voted 5-0 to go into executive session at 10:00 p.m. to conduct an interview.

On motion by Councilwoman Shah, seconded by Councilman Welsh, the Board voted 5-0 to come out of executive session at 10:20 p.m.

LEWISBORO BOARD OF ETHICS – Appointment Member

On motion by Supervisor Gonçalves, seconded by Councilman Welsh, the Board voted as follows:

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

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board does hereby appoint Eileen Nadelson to the Lewisboro Board of Ethics.

On motion by Councilwoman Rendo, seconded by Councilwoman Shah, the Board voted 5-0 to go back into Executive Session at 10:24 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Councilwoman Shah, seconded by Councilman Sklarin, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 10:28 p.m.

Janet L. Donohue  
Town Clerk