

The Town of Moriah Town Board held their Regular Town Board Meeting on Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 6:00pm at the Town of Moriah Court House, 42 Park Place, Port Henry, NY.

Present: Matthew Brassard Supervisor
Paul Salerno Councilman
Nathan Gilbo Councilman

Absent: Tom Anderson Councilman

Others Present: Bill Trybendis, Bruno Mazzotte, Paul & Nancy Tromblee, Mark Lashway, Jim Curran, Jamie Wilson and Rose French-Town Clerk

The Supervisor opened the meeting at 6:00pm by saluting the flag.

ON MOTION by Councilman Gilbo, seconded by Councilman Salerno, the following resolution was APPROVED

Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
Nays	0
Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED that the Town of Moriah Town Board approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

Floor Open to the Public:

Bruno Mazzotte asked what the COVID money was and the Supervisor stated it came from the federal Government-America recovery funds; the Town received @ \$500,000. We have spent some on the new ball field and the campgrounds. Councilman Salerno stated we had an informational meeting on how to spend the money. The Supervisor stated we also bought a new senior van. There is roughly \$350,000 left. The Supervisor stated we will pay the engineers for the beach house renovations at Port Henry Beach. An RFP will go out regarding an event space at Port Beach also. Any leftover money is up to the Town Board and the community on how it is spent. The Supervisor stated during the informational meeting the public was unanimous that the money should be spent on the lake front. Bruno Mazzotte stated there are 3 other hamlets in the Town. Councilman Salerno stated yes, the money should be spent in each hamlet. Bruno Mazzotte stated there were a few ladies at the last meeting asking for playground equipment. The Supervisor stated we bought a playground for Bulwagga Bay Campground. Councilman Salerno stated that cost \$65,000. Bruno Mazzotte stated the ladies were looking for playground equipment north of Bryant's.

Bruno Mazzotte stated there is a sign by Mill Brook in the center; all it needs is a bolt and washer; looks terrible; needs to be fixed. He also stated that the basketball nets at the pickle ball court in Moriah Corners needs new nets.

Bruno Mazzotte asked what was going on with the Ambulance Squad. The Supervisor stated we sent them a certified letter regarding their financials. The Supervisor received a call from them and were told they will get the information to the Town Board within 2 weeks. Bruno Mazzotte asked if the person who was suspended used sick time or what; Mr. Mazzotte stated he transferred to UVM on June 11, 2024. He stated he found out all this information after 10 minutes on the internet with the Comptroller's Office. Mr. Mazzotte asked if he was a Moriah EMS employee or County EMS employee and the Supervisor stated he was County. Mr. Mazzotte asked why he was suspended and the Supervisor stated that is a confidential personnel issue that would have been handled in executive session. Mr. Mazzotte stated the last time they filed income tax was for 2018 and it was filed in 2021; he stated they switched accountants are now a 501C. The Supervisor stated they agreed to send their financials. Mr. Mazzotte stated he is going to meet with the BCI; he stated the Comptroller would love to get in their books. Councilman Salerno asked what the Town Board can do and Mr. Mazzotte stated nothing, they are a 501C; Town Board can't oversee the ambulance budget. Councilman Salerno stated that he and the Supervisor met with the fire commissioners. The Supervisor stated they have until September to put the district vote on the ballot.

Paul Tromblee asked if there was a legal notice regarding the public hearing on the ambulance district and the Town Clerk said yes, it is on the Facebook page, town website, newspaper and signboard at the Town Hall. Paul Tromblee stated we should take the \$500,000 in COVID money

and do a police department or help the fire departments. He stated the ambulance squad will go on. Bruno Mazzotte stated \$327,000 for an ambulance is ridiculous; they need to be more transparent.

Jim Curran stated the Champlain Hudson Power Express Project is underway; transmission line in Lake Champlain; he asked the Supervisor how much money the Town will get for this project. The Supervisor stated it is a pilot program and it is so much per mile; he stated the previous Supervisor did most of the work on this project.

Paul Tromblee asked how the Moriah Ambulance Squad pays the EMT's and the Supervisor stated it is through billing and the Town appropriates \$50,000 to them. Jim Curran asked if they had a grant and the Supervisor stated that grant ran out. Paul Tromblee stated that is the problem; now that the grant has run out the County is dumping people and expecting the Town to pay for them. He stated the County created this mess; now they want to put it on the Towns. Councilman Salerno asked why do we need 6 or 8 EMT's now, used to run with only 2.

Department Head/Town Board Reports:

Jamie Wilson –Highway Superintendent reported the Highway Department is working on their summer projects. Started paving-having a hard time getting black top; they are working on Elk Inn Road right now and will do the south end of Lake View Avenue. The Supervisor stated there are no asphalt plants in Essex County anymore and Mr. Wilson said that is correct. Mr. Wilson stated he will be looking to hire a couple of people; if you have your CDL permit the Town will help you get your license. Councilman Salerno asked Mr. Wilson how many employees he currently has and Mr. Wilson stated they used to have 9-10 employees; now they only have 6-7; plus, they take care of Port Henry now.

Councilman Salerno stated Bulwagga Bay Campsite has 162 seasonals; transient sites are up 50% from last year; 30 people on waiting list. Councilman Salerno would like to take 4 of the 12 transient sites and make them seasonal sites. Councilman Gilbo asked if this was at Bulwagga Bay Campsite or Champ RV Park and Councilman Salerno stated at Bulwagga Bay Campsite. Councilman Gilbo would like to see a spreadsheet of the pros and cons financially if we do this and then go wherever the money takes us.

Councilman Salerno stated there are 162 seasonals at Bulwagga Bay Campsite; he suggested using COVID money to construct a 10 X 12 building for a washer and dryer; he feels it would be an asset to the campground. Councilman Gilbo asked if there was room to put them in one of the existing bathrooms and Councilman Salerno said yes; he would like to put a suggestion box out there to see how many people would use it. The Supervisor stated there is an email list we could do it that way; this discussion was tabled until emails were sent out and responded to whether this is a good idea or not.

Councilman Salerno stated Champ RV Park has 75 seasonals; 11 on waiting list; they were busy over Memorial Day Weekend; transient sites are ahead of schedule. Councilman Salerno feels if we could get blue prints from an architect on the beach house the work could be done in house; he stated he would donate his time for the plumbing; would have to go out to bid for the electrical. The Supervisor stated we will look in to it.

Councilman Salerno read the May police report: 8 traffic tickets, handled 3 traffic accidents, handled 7 domestic disputes, 1 endangering the welfare of a child arrest, 1 obstruction of justice arrest, 1 criminal mischief 4th arrest, 1 harassment in the 2nd degree arrest, 4 dog complaints handled with ACO; assisted state police and the sheriff's department on several calls.

Councilman Salerno reported on Building & Grounds; the cemeteries look good and the Water & Sewer Department are plugging away.

Councilman Gilbo stated he received plans from the architect regarding the beach house at Champ RV Park; they are as built dimensions; feasibility study; last month approved resolution to go out for RFQ's; should have been RFP's; he thinks they will be due in August. Councilman Gilbo stated he has received 150 responses for the ad on zip recruiter regarding a grant writer; he will reach out to 25 of them for an interview when the ad cycle is over. The Supervisor stated thank you, zip recruiter was a great idea.

Supervisor's Report:

The Supervisor stated you will see some activity on Lake Champlain; they are putting in the power line in front of Paulies.

We received our equalization rate from Essex County Real Property; we are at 68%; not the lowest; out of 18 Town's only 6 are at 100%. Councilman Salerno would like to ask the Assessor's to come to board meeting; the Supervisor stated yes, we can ask them; however, they are elected officials. Councilman Gilbo said yes, ask the Assessor's to come to a board meeting; he would also like to see all department heads at the monthly board meetings as well.

123. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Gilbo, seconded by Councilman Salerno, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED that every department head be at every monthly town board meeting unless excused by the Supervisor; if excused they will need to turn in a written monthly report.

Mark Lashway asked when the revaluation would be coming and the Supervisor stated the Assessor's told him they have 300 homes left to do. The Supervisor stated the roll should have been kept up.

The Supervisor reported the solar project on Tarbell Hill is underway. The Town and School will receive \$12,500 each as part of the pilot agreement. Mark Lashway asked if there was some type of built in protection in the pilot if the company goes under and walks away and the Town is left to clean it up. The Supervisor stated he will look in to it and call the Town Attorney, Bill Tansey. The Supervisor stated it would be the County's problem ultimately if the landowner didn't pay the taxes. Councilman Gilbo stated he will review the pilot; he would be surprised if there wasn't anything in there regarding the Town and private property.

Paul Tromblee asked Councilman Gilbo if he sat in on the meetings and Councilman Gilbo said yes. Councilman Gilbo quickly reviewed the contract and it is 25,000 per year for 15 years; Town will get \$12,500 and the School will get \$12,500. Paul Tromblee stated its only goods for 15 years, then what and the Supervisor stated the Town will have to sit down and negotiate a new contract. Paul Tromblee stated there should be something in the current contract to renegotiate. The Supervisor stated he will ask Bill Tansey, Town Attorney about it.

The Supervisor stated we got the inspection report back on Bulwagga Bay Campsite; 8 issues; all on backflow preventers.

Resolutions:

124. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED to set Water and Sewer Installation Charges: Complete Water Hook Up- \$1,200.00, Complete Water Hook Up Crossing Road- \$2,000.00, Shut off valve-\$150.00, Complete Sewer Hookup - \$1,200.00, Complete Sewer Hookup/crossing road - \$2,000.00. All charges must be authorized by the Water & Sewer Superintendent and paid in full at Town Hall before installation.

Discussion: The Supervisor met with Art Morgan; he stated we barely make enough money for the blacktop.

125. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Gilbo, seconded by Councilman Salerno, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED a resolution of condolence to Highway Superintendent Jamie Wilson on the passing of his father, Eugene Wilson.

126. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED to hire 18 students for the YCC Program; pay rate \$12.00/hr; working 12-20 hours/week.

Discussion: The Supervisor stated this year we had the most kids apply; in the best interest of everybody to hire them all.

127. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED to accept quote from Bryant's Lumber in the amount of \$8,758.11 for the 24 X 24 maintenance building at Bulwagga Bay Campsite; work will be done in house by the campsite staff.

Discussion: The Supervisor stated Bryant's Lumber was the lowest. Curtis Lumber was \$11,234.25 and Bessboro Lumber was \$11,857.71. Councilman Salerno stated \$25,000 was appropriated out of COVID money for this project. Councilman Gilbo stated we are using COVID money for this and Councilman Salerno said yes.

128. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED approval to do transfers in budget as needed.

129. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED approval to do adjustments in water and sewer as needed.

130. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Gilbo, seconded by Councilman Salerno, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED approval of payment of end of month and monthly warrants.

131. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED to pay the bands weekly for the farmer's market out of bed tax money.

132. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Gilbo, seconded by Councilman Salerno, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED to go out for RFP's for an engineering firm to create a map, plan and report for the consolidation of all sewer districts in the Town of Moriah.

Discussion: Councilman Gilbo asked if this was just for sewer, what about water, he thought we talked about consolidating the water districts also. Paul Tromblee stated it should be one water district and one sewer district. The Supervisor stated yes, with the exception of Port Henry; they pay water debt. Paul Tromblee asked if the rates were the same. The Town Clerk stated Port Henry pays \$103.00 in water debt.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED to go out for RFP's for an engineering firm to create a map, plan and report for the consolidation of all water districts in the Town of Moriah also.

Floor Open to the Public:

Councilman Salerno stated Moriah Shocks sewer bill is based on the point system; based on 250 inmates; \$105,000 and they don't want to pay it. If they don't pay it, it goes back on the district. The Supervisor stated the head of DOCCS is looking in to it. The Supervisor stated if they don't pay that will put Sewer District #1 in the hole by \$105,000. The Supervisor stated Becky did a quick analysis and that would add about \$120 to everybody's bill in that district.

Councilman Salerno stated we had to use the COVID money by the end of the year and the Supervisor corrected him saying it has to be allocated by December 31, 2024. Jamie Wilson Highway Superintendent stated we should put some money in to the existing buildings that the Town owns.

Jim Curran asked about the BBQ pit at the new ball field on College Street. The Supervisor thinks this is a great idea; the drainage needs to be fixed first.

Paul Tromblee asked if the Town would be getting any grants to replace the sewer lines and the Supervisor stated the Town has already secured \$5,000,000 for Plank Road.

Councilman Gilbo stated he is a budget guy and the Board goes through a yearly budget exercise; he feels if any money is used out of the fund balance above what was allocated originally all Board members should vote on it; for example; the \$8,758.11 on the maintenance building at Bulwagga Bay Campsite.

133. **ON MOTION** by Councilman Salerno, seconded by Councilman Gilbo, the following resolution was

APPROVED	Ayes	Brassard, Salerno, Gilbo
	Nays	0
	Absent	Anderson

RESOLVED that any money used out the Town fund balance above and beyond what was originally allocated needs to be voted on by all Town Board members.

Discussion: Councilman Salerno asked what if a transmission goes in a highway truck, that's not budgeted for; Councilman Gilbo stated the Board needs to vote on it; the Supervisor stated the Board cannot make Mr. Wilson wait a month to get the repair done; Councilman Salerno asked if the vote could be done through email. Paul Tromblee stated that is an emergency situation.

Bruno Mazzotte stated we have a laundromat in Town, if we provide washers/dryers at Bulwagga Bay Campsite, that could possibly put them out of business.

Mr. Mazzotte stated you would need to be an accountant to look at the Ambulance Squad books. The Comptroller's Office needs to look at them. Councilman Salerno stated the Town can only look at where they spent the \$50,000 from the Town. Mr. Mazzotte said yes, that is what the Comptroller said. Councilman Gilbo stated that is a good place to start; they are legally obligated for \$50,000.

The meeting adjourned at 7:08pm.

Abstract Distributions:

Claim Numbers:

May 24, 2024

2024/785-791

General	\$272.81
Highway	\$1,593.02
Water District #1	\$38.72
Water District #2	\$26.27
Water District #4	\$4.14
Sewer District #1	\$89.99
Sewer District #2	\$11.23

June 10, 2024

2024/792-932

General	\$1,600.00
Highway	\$,800.00
Water District #1	\$336.00
Water District #2	\$228.00
Water District #3	\$600.00
Water District #4	\$36.00
Sewer District #1	\$990.00
Sewer District #2	\$210.00

June 10, 2024

2024/932

General	\$500.00
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June 20, 2024

2024/809-984

General	\$67,020.20
Highway	\$12,692.43
Water District #1	\$26,615.19
Water District #2	\$17,854.00
Water District #3	\$3,920.61
Water District #4	\$136.22
Sewer District #1	\$17,695.71
Sewer District #2	\$,415.20

Stimulus Funds-Beach House Renovations-Champ RV Park

AEDA	\$1,000.00	#2
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Stimulus Funds-College Street Field

Bryant's Lumber	\$136.85	#2
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Town Clerk