

**State of New York  
County of Fulton  
Town of Stratford REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Municipal Building, 120 Piseco Road  
March 8, 2018**

Present:

Alicia Rice	Supervisor
Richard Fogarty	Councilman
Allan Perkins	Councilman
Joan Ploss	Councilwoman
Lorraine Rumrill	Councilwoman
Heather VanDenburgh	Town Clerk
Norman Wright	Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Sokira	BTI Director

Absent:

Charles Goodwin	Highway Superintendent
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Town Officials Not Required to Attend:

Leigh Anne Loucks	Assessor
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Number of Residents in Attendance: 14 (See attached attendance sheet)

Supervisor Rice called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC HEARING on Stratford Volunteer Fire Company Contract (6:30pm-7:14pm)**

Chief Vedder and 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Coviak shared the Stratford Volunteer Fire Company's annual budget between 2008-2018 and explained the various costs of running the Company. Supervisor Rice, a member of the Company, explained we are Fire Protection District which contracts with the Stratford Company, which is incorporated and owns its own assets. We have (17) members in our Company, and had (23) calls in 2017, including (3) fires, (4) rescue calls, and (14) hazardous condition calls which included trees/wires down, MVA's, etc. The Fire Department building needs foundation repairs as well, which could run into the tens of thousands of dollars. Chief Vedder also stated they needed a washer and dryer area to wash their turnout equipment, the cost being approximately \$6,000 to install. The Company receives a \$5,000 Kirby grant every year, and hopes to receive double that amount next year for the repairs. However, any building repairs needed come out of their "Truck Fund," which could short them if they ever need significant repairs in the future. They are also looking at required cancer insurance, which at this time could cost up to \$300 per member. We have a mutual aid agreement with local Companies such as Salisbury, Hill Top, and Dolgeville Fire Departments should we need backup as our Company is not equipped for large incidents such as structure fires. A question was posed to see if we should investigate combining with Salisbury's Company, but Chief Vedder stated Salisbury is not interested, that it would cost Stratford more than the contracted \$60,000/year, and that if we need Salisbury, they are always willing to help due to the mutual aid agreement. Councilwoman Rumrill asked if the Stratford Company would be willing to give a monthly report to the board on calls answered, but Chief Vedder declined this request and stated he would give a yearly report only. It was also mentioned that the contract between Stratford and the Stratford Fire Company should be done during the annual budget hearings.

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**RESOLUTION 15-18 APPROVING THE STRATFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY CONTRACT**

**WHEREAS**, the Stratford Town Board held its public hearing regarding the Stratford Volunteer Fire Company (SVFC) Contract on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 during the regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting;

**WHEREAS**, the public and Town Board took the opportunity to discuss the SVFC contract at length;

**WHEREAS**, the following information was discussed and reviewed by the Stratford Town Board; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Stratford Town Board approves the 2018 Stratford Volunteer Fire Company contract in the amount of \$60,000.00.

**Offered by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Fogarty**

<b>ADOPTED: 3 AYES</b>	<b>Fogarty, Ploss, Rumrill</b>
<b>0 NAYS</b>	
<b>2 Recusals</b>	<b>Rice, Perkins (Members of the Stratford Volunteer Fire Company)</b>

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Correspondence:

MOVAC: The Stratford Town Board and Stratford residents are invited to the rural symposium “Brewing Crisis in Rural Pre-Hospital Care” presented by the MOVAC Directors and Staff on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, between 6:30pm-8:45pm at the Herkimer College Robert McLaughlin College Center Amphitheatre CC288.

THINKDIFFERENTLY: Supervisor Rice presented the Board with an initiative and resolution from Dutchess County to consider. The ThinkDIFFERENTLY resolution encourages communities to support and engage with those with disabilities and/or special needs and to realize their contributions and abilities. Supervisor Rice read the provided Resolution aloud, and Town Clerk VanDenburgh stated her support as a parent of a special needs child.

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**RESOLUTION 16-18 TO ADOPT THE “THINK DIFFERENTLY” INITIATIVE TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

**WHEREAS**, the “Think Differently” initiative is about promoting awareness and acceptance of all people, and advocating for the inclusion of all individuals living on the Autism Spectrum and with special needs; and

**WHEREAS**, our state and communities are stronger because of our diversity and differences; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) over 55 million people, or approximately 19% of Americans, have a type of disability or special need; and

**WHEREAS**, for some people with special needs, the very things that make them unique can also keep them on the sidelines, separate from those who might not understand their differences or uniqueness; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important to promote and provide guidance to those with special needs on how to access publicly supported services available to them in the community; and



OFFICE OF THE AGING: Residents are invited by the Fulton County Office for Aging to “March for Meals” on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, between 10am-1pm. Supervisor Rice stated that meals provided by this program are served in Stratford, and the Town contributes \$350 towards this program. The Board and public are encouraged to participate. Supervisor Rice will provide response sheets for those interested.

ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS NY MUNICIPAL ENERGY PROGRAM: The Town of Stratford has been invited to participate in the New York Municipal Energy Program, which “will negotiate lower energy costs for electricity and natural gas.” More information is necessary.

**Motion to table the Association of Towns NY Municipal Energy Program until more information is gathered was offered by Councilman Fogarty, seconded by Rumrill.**

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES**                      **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**  
**0 NAYS**

DRUG & ALCOHOL ANNUAL REPORT: Jefferson-Lewis BOCES provided their semi-annual report (July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017-December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017) regarding the Town Highway employees and their substance/alcohol test results, which were all negative.

NATIONAL GRID: The Town Barn is at risk of losing their SC2ND electric rate through National Grid, as their electric usage has been over 2000 kWh for (2) cycles. If they continue to use over 2000 kWh for the next (2) cycles, a SC-2 demand rate will be applied and possibly a new demand meter. Supervisor Rice stated that the increased cost is due to the fans for the heating system, and Superintendent Goodwin is keeping an eye on the meter.

Highway Superintendent Goodwin’s February 2018 report was reviewed by the Town Board. (See attached).

Code Enforcement Officer Wright’s February 2018 report was reviewed by Town Board. (See attached). A discussion took place about updating the Flood Plain maps, and the Town Clerk’s office is currently in search of Local Law 1-1987 regarding the purchase of flood insurance for residents of the town. Councilman Fogarty again brought up the delapidated property across from Piseco Road on 29A and asked if there were any remedies to get it cleaned up quicker. CEO Wright stated that beyond ticketing, his hands were tied and that the Town Board had the option to pass a resolution to clean up the property. Supervisor Rice again explained that the Town would be unable to bill the owner for the cleanup. CEO Wright stated he gave the owner until March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, to clean up the property before he would ticket him. Further research will be done by Supervisor Rice to see what is involved in condemning a property, as there is a concern of rats.

DCO Jaquay’s report was reviewed by the Town Board (See attached). Her last case had (4) tickets, pled guilty, and only faced a \$25 fine. There was a shared services meeting between Salisbury and Oppenheim DCO’s and a discussion about neighboring townships sharing dog control services when their perspective DCO isn’t available. All townships agree, but a future discussion is needed regarding the payment of these services.

Supervisor Rice thanked both CEO Wright and DCO Jaquay for their diligence in the court proceedings they are/were involved in.

There was no Assessor report for February 2018.

BTI Director Michael Sokira updated (2) quadrant maps which need to be sent to the DEC and is awaiting a meeting on Saturday. New landowners in the district have been sent the BTI information and permission form.

Supervisor Rice's Report: Bell Engineering provided their agreement to assist the Town of Stratford "in preparing the application form for bridge replacement projects, specifically the Irish Settlement Road Bridge BIN 2204040" at a cost of \$150/hour, not to exceed (10) hours, or \$1,500.00. The draft proposal is due by March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Town Procurement Policy: Councilman Fogarty requested further investigation into the Procurement Policy, as he would like to see clearer guidelines for smaller purchases.

**A motion was made to table the Town Procurement Policy.**

**Offered by Councilman Fogarty, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill**

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES**                      **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**  
**0 NAYS**

Facebook Page: Supervisor Rice presented a copy of the County of Fulton's Policy for Use of Social Media. It was decided that the Town of Stratford would create a Facebook page for the use of notifying the public on matters of the Town, with Town Clerk VanDenburgh and Councilwoman Rumrill as Co-Administrators. Town Clerk VanDenburgh suggested writing a social media policy that included what residents of the town could and could not request to be post along with a simple request form. This will be pursued further.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The Town Board was provided the February 2018 bank statement. Councilman Fogarty asked about scrap metal that Superintendent Goodwin disposed of and where in the budget it would show, Supervisor Rice stated it was in the November 2017 monthly budget report for \$133, and that Superintendent Goodwin supplied a receipt for it.

MONTHLY BUDGET UPDATE REPORT:

Town Clerk VanDenburgh notified the Board Members that she used the wrong appropriation code for the National Grid Outdoor Lighting bill and would fix it immediately.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

MARCH ABSTRACTS:

2018 GENERAL FUND	VOUCHERS 19-28	\$ 1,861.06
2018 PREPAID FUND	VOUCHERS 29-42	\$ 6,961.11
2018 HIGHWAY FUND	VOUCHERS 17-29	\$10,078.64

**A motion was offered by Councilwoman Rumrill and seconded by Councilwoman Ploss to approve the payment of these vouchers.**

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES**                      **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**  
**0 NAYS**

OLD BUSINESS:

A suggestion was made by Councilman Fogarty to look into replacing the transfer station pole light with a LED flood light. This would illuminate the transfer station area much more effectively, and possibly be helpful in an emergency after a helicopter has landed there. Supervisor Rice will consult with Fulton County, as they pay for the light. There was also a suggestion to change the Transfer Station day from Monday to Tuesday due to holidays often falling on a Monday, rendering the Transfer Station closed. This creates a (5) day gap between days the Transfer Station is open.

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**RESOLUTION 18-18 CHANGING THE TRANSFER STATION DAY OPEN FROM MONDAY TO TUESDAY**

**WHEREAS**, the Stratford Transfer Station is currently open from 5pm-8pm every Monday and Thursday, 8am-4pm Saturdays, and summer hours of 5pm-7pm on Sundays between the Fourth of July and Labor Day;

**WHEREAS**, the Monday Transfer Station Hours often fall on a holiday, closing the use of the Transfer Station to the residents of Stratford;

**WHEREAS**, when closed on Monday due to a holiday, the Stratford Transfer Station does not re-open until the Thursday following said holiday, creating a (5) day gap of access to the residents of Stratford;

**WHEREAS**, this (5) day gap can cause hardship for the residents of Stratford attempting to utilize the Transfer Station;

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town Board of Stratford votes to change the Stratford Transfer Station day open from Mondays to Tuesdays, keeping the current hours of 5pm-8pm.

**Offered by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill.**

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES**                      **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**  
**0 NAYS**

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Councilwoman Rumrill mentioned the motion in a previous meeting to buy (6) lighter-weight 8' tables. Councilwoman Rumrill mentioned that Salisbury purchased theirs at BJ's for a decent price. Supervisor Rice will speak to Custodian Aubin about this.

Councilman Fogarty proposed to have Mike from Little Falls Hardware come out and see if he is able to do a power vent for the furnace as well as quote the installation of radiant heat at the Town Barn. The Town Board agreed. They are still waiting on McCarthy's bid on doing the cricket fix to the Town Barn.

NEW BUSINESS:

Building Custodian Aubin spoke to Supervisor Rice on the condition of the kitchen floor in the Town Hall, and stated he'd like to replace it. He intends to lift the old floor, lay lauan, and place self-stick vinyl tiles down. He estimates it would be \$500 to do the work.

**A motion was made by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss, to have Custodian Aubin replace the Town Hall kitchen floor at an estimated cost of \$500.**

**AYES: 5**                                      **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**  
**NAYS: 0**

Town Clerk VanDenburgh was excited to announce that with a little investigation, the NYS Broadband Program had awarded close to \$6 million dollars to Verizon to bring fiber broadband to Stratford, a much-needed commodity in our community. She stated that large census blocks of Stratford would have access to it but it was difficult to say if all were. Those that weren't would be covered by Hughes Net. The NYS Broadband Program requires providers to cap their price at \$60/month for a minimum of 25mbps speed, and can only charge a \$49 installation fee. Please contact the Town Clerk if you'd like more information.

**PUBLIC SPEAKING: Commenced at 8:22pm**

Town Clerk VanDenburgh answered questions to the best of her ability about the broadband program. One resident asked about pertinent things we could post to our Facebook page, like lost dogs, which the Town agreed with. Town Clerk VanDenburgh requested a copy of the BTI forms from BTI Director Sokira for her office, as (2) residents in the community have asked her for a copy. A comment about random street lights either being out or on all of the time being fixed and/or upgraded to LED lighting; Supervisor Rice said she would get in contact with NYSERTA and National Grid to see what options were available.

**PUBLIC SPEAKING: Closed at 8:37pm**

Motion to go into executive session for "possible litigation" from Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Perkins at 8:37 pm.

Motion to resume regular meeting from Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Fogarty at 8:44pm.

With no further business, on a motion from Councilwoman Ploss and seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill, the regular meeting was adjourned at 8:44pm.

*-Heather VanDenburgh, Town Clerk*