

March 25, 2015

The Town Board of the Town of Clayton held their regular meeting at the Town hall, First Floor, 405 Riverside Drive, with the following persons present:

Justin Taylor	Christopher Matthews	Mary Zovistoski
Lance Peterson	Robert W. Cantwell III	William Sherman
Kathy LaClair	Janet Sullins	
Terra Bach	Jake Tibbles	Katie Clark Ross
Kevin Patchen	Don Dilworth	Sharon Dilworth
Pam McDowell	Dan Schleher	Linda Schleher
P J Schleher	Duane Hazelton	Cindy Hazelton
Paul Luck	Mary Luck	Tom LaRochelle
Lonnie LaRochelle	Michael Casselman	Terry Craddock
Stephen D. Busby	Don Badour	Tom Tinney
Julie Tinney	Phil Randazzo	Nancy Hyde
Dan Haycock	Susie O'Neill	Larry Aubertine
Tom Bogenschutz Jr.	Donna Patchen	Chip Garnsey
Karen Ver Degaal	Heide Ver Degaal	Chris Bogenschutz
Tricia Bannister	Megan Whitton	Fritz Delaney
Kelly Kittle	Roland Halloway	Pat Taylor
Fred Schmitt	Cindy Grant	Amy Getman
Harry Bazinet	Emilie Cardinaux	Lori Arnot
Cheryl Howard	George Bowes	Marion Bowes
Pat Youngs	Jacque A Cerow	Cynthia Cerow
Lori Durand	Erin Greene	Twyla Webb
Paul Webb	Rebecca Gouge	Gary Elliott
John Murray	Beverly Murray	Mike Perruccio
Jack Stopper	George E. Kittle	Philip Carnegie
Barry Robinson	Shane Shaffer	Art Cady
Matt Turcotte	Mike Badour	Daniel Badour
Jean Badour	Chuck Burlingame	Christopher Neville
Sarah Baldwin	Ronald N. Duford	Nicole Cornaire
Kim Quen	Lou Badour	Sheila Badour
Pam Fox	Mary Heyman	Lisa Ingerson Johnson
Scott Johnson	Laura Reff	Mark Reff
Cary Brick	Julie Garnsey	Jeff Garnsey

Opening and Pledge of Allegiance: Supervisor Taylor opened the meeting at 5:00 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guest: Jake Tibbles, Executive Director of the Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) presented a slide show describing the mission and accomplishments of TILT over the 30 years it has been in existence. TILT is nationally accredited, and is in compliance with all the standards of the Land Trust Alliance. It is a non-profit, conservation oriented organization which covers an area of the Thousand Islands Region from Grenadier Island on the West to the Town of Hammond in the East. Fifty percent of its

lands are non-taxable, fee-owned and fifty percent are conservation easements, privately owned. There are ninety (90) land trusts in New York State, and seventeen hundred (1,700) in the United States. He explained that land trusts had their beginning in the foresight of city officials of New York City, when they put aside land for Central Park. But, being in the Frontenac Arch, extending down from Canada, it is underlain with bedrock, which has the most diverse ecosystem in the Eastern United States. He described the different areas of which they are stewards, their diversity, to protect wildlife and natural habitat. He also described some of the programs they sponsor, for adults and children, to get them out into nature and appreciate what we have, not just here, but all over. He also had graphics showing how little of the taxable land the trust owns, relative to taking it off the tax rolls, compared to what other non-profit organizations own. And he ended with how TILT is working with the Town of Clayton with its comprehensive plan for the future.

Town Clerk:

Correspondence:

- ❖ Received letter from Jim Perlet, concerned tax payer, about the designation on Scenic Area of Statewide Significance. **(See attachment Book).**
- ❖ DEC Permit for the Clayton State Route 12 Sewer District has been received. **(See file).**
- ❖ Notice from Office of Real Property Tax services that Roger Howard and Charles Burlingame have required Board of Assessment Training in April. **(See attachment Book).**
- ❖ Justice Will Ramseier Report for February Comptroller's Report. **(See attachment Book).**
- ❖ Correspondence from LaFave, White & McGivern, L.S., P.C., who are performing a survey of property on Crystal Springs Road that adjoins or is near property listed to the Town. **(See attachment Book).**
- ❖ Time Warner apprising of developments affecting subscribers in the Western New York Division. **(See attachment Book).**
- ❖ Notice from NYS Alcoholic Beverage Control, concerning a new application for River Spirits, LLC, 105 State Street, Clayton. **(See file).**
- ❖ Grants Action News, March 2015 issue received. **(See attachment Book).**

Minutes:

Motion by Chris Matthews, seconded by Mary Zovistoski, to approve the March 11, 2015 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Frink Dock Development: Supervisor Taylor is travelling to Montreal tomorrow to meet with the engineering firm and installers of the transient docks. They expect to ship the gangway as early as Friday and the docks will start to ship in Early April. Installation will depend on ice conditions.

USDA-RD Community Economic Development: A meeting was held last week with the following parties in attendance: Representatives from the Towns and Villages of Clayton, Cape Vincent, Alexandria Bay and Orleans. A presentation was given by Mike Mannigan from USDA-RD Community Economic Development. Supervisor Taylor had previously received authorization from the Clayton Town Board to sign a contract with Dave Mosier and will put this on hold to see what USDA-RD has to offer.

Grindstone Island Mowing: Currently the contract for mowing two Grindstone Island Cemeteries is bid out yearly, as are the contracts for electrical, carpentry and masonry, etc. Supervisor Taylor suggested to the Board that all of those contracts be for a two year period. The Board agreed unanimously. A two year notice to bid for the Cemetery Maintenance will be put in the TI Sun next week for returns the following week.

Assessor Update- Interview Schedule: The Supervisor asked if one of the Board members would volunteer to sit with him, starting the 2nd week in April when an interview team from Clayton and Cape Vincent starts conducting interviews for an assessor. Councilwoman Zovistoski volunteered.

Blind Bay Associates Extension Request:

There has been a request from Mr. Weller that the Route 12 Sewer extension include the properties he wishes to subdivide. The Supervisor has asked our attorney and engineer to look into it.

Bank Discussion:

The town has received proposals from Watertown Savings Bank and Community Bank to set up accounts. We have been using Key Bank for most of our banking, but have other accounts with Watertown Savings Bank. Key Bank has started imposing fees on some accounts, so Supervisor Taylor asked for a motion to move the majority of our accounts to Watertown Savings Bank and consider some investments at Community Bank. **Motion** by Bobby Cantwell III, 2nd by Chris Matthews to move accounts from Key Bank to the WSB and Community Bank N.A. Motion carried.

Fort Drum FDRLO Rally: The FDRLO Rally for Ft. Drum, held at the Antique Boat Museum last Thursday was a success. Ft. Drum and Pentagon dignitaries were present and impressed with the welcome display of our flag draped from our fire trucks at the entrance of the Antique Boat Museum. It was a good opportunity to speak with them about the importance of having Ft. Drum in the North Country.

Highway Superintendent Report:

- We are cutting brush along the roads.
- Hauling sand for another community.
- Going to Rochester on the 1st of April to look at purchasing another Manlift.

Committee Reports:

Councilman Peterson: Nothing to report

Councilman Matthews: Nothing to report.

Councilman Cantwell: Nothing to report.

Councilman Zovistoski:

Bids were opened this afternoon for updates to the Depauville Library. They will be reviewed and brought back to the Board for awarding.

We requested grant monies from Senator Ritchie and were granted \$50,000 dollars. It will be split between the Depauville Library and the Arena. The library will receive \$32,000. The Arena will receive \$18,000.

Public Meeting for the Position of Town Manager:

At 6:30, Supervisor Taylor opened the Public Meeting regarding the position of a Town Manager. He welcomed comments from the public after the Power Point presentation, but also asked that everyone be civil and respectful of others opinions and that there be no personal attacks.

In the PowerPoint, which was also printed out for the public and on-line, he described the duties of the Supervisor. He compared his role today compared to supervisors we had as far back as the 1970s. He said how far we have come having a place to house our personnel, as opposed to holding meetings in the supervisor's home, or having to go to the clerk's or judge's home to take care of business. He described how the Town has grown to be a complex community. It has been very successful especially since Bob Cantwell's term, being a full-time position. And now he has a secretary and part-time financial staff. Having a Town Manager would not take over any of the legal duties of the supervisor and town board as set forth by the State of New York. Two of the flow charts in the presentation showed the set up of the personnel: one presently, and then how it would be if we hired a Town Manager.

He then opened up the floor to the public.

Susie O'Neill: Not in favor. She asked each board member their feelings on hiring a Town manager.

Chris Matthews: **In favor.** In 64 years Clayton has had 4 supervisors, one only 18 months, but all capable. In the last 20 years, it's been Bob Cantwell and Justin (Taylor). They have done a wonderful job whether or not you like them personally. He is concerned for the future that the next supervisor might take us backwards. He will not take the risk that the next Supervisor would not be capable. He believes you need Town Board experience to be a good supervisor, that it would provide consistency.

Lance Peterson: **Not in favor.** But no one on the Town Board wants to be the next supervisor, either. The supervisor needs to lean on the Department heads and their workers to take up some of the menial tasks to get by without a Town Manager, at least for the short term.

Mary Zovistoski: **Not in favor.** The role of the Supervisor is complex. Justin is doing what he was elected to do. But she is taking a cue from the people (who elected her), so she is not in favor.

Bobby Cantwell III: **In favor.** For 19 plus years we have had full- or part-time supervisors. In order to be confident, in attending meetings or coming into an office, he has to be confident that the information he receives is correct. He represents the people. Cantwell quoted someone: "People need to listen to learn, not to react."

George Kittle: In favor. Mr. Kittle said that Clayton is a big business, bigger than the surrounding towns. He said that every supervisor has had his skill set and the projects they completed paid off their salaries, especially during the ice storm. You get what you pay for. Clayton has a lot of amenities that other towns lack, and was also the first town to initiate combining departments and having shared services, for example, the zoning and planning boards, with the Village; the highway department, with the Village, and others with government (county, state.) He thinks a full-time manager would be an asset. Clayton is being watched by every town around. Obviously the duties and salaries would change, but we need to keep moving forward.

Paul Luck: Not in favor. He thanked the Town of Clayton Board for all it has accomplished. He has talked with each of them. He thinks the TB should meet with Department heads and help correct any problems created. A Town Manager would need careful scrutiny. He is not convinced that one is needed, but if so, that person should have a Masters degree in Public Administration and at least

five years experience; have good interpersonal skills and be willing to relocate to live in Clayton. If one is considered, it should be put to a referendum to all the people, year-round and seasonal. It should also be cost-neutral: review Department head salaries, consider the cost of benefits the Board receives, the supervisor should give up some of his salary, and he hoped they haven't already identified the candidate. He has looked at the City of Watertown's manager's salary and what she has to oversee, and it is far greater in scope than our Town. He does not think it is worth the money.

Supervisor Taylor said that since the previous highway superintendent has retired, his replacement has a lower salary; the assessor has resigned, and he hopes her replacement will be coming in at a lower salary; the Town Clerk's salary is set by the Town Board after a review, and the Town Justices have reasonable salaries. He also said that his expectations have always been set high; that he has instituted a monthly department head meeting so that he keeps in touch with what they have going. As far as Town Board benefits are concerned, some do not have them through the town if their spouse has good benefits, but the union does give them an incentive if they opt out.

Lori Arnot: In favor. She has always been pro-active, being ready for any situation before it happens. She believes that a town manager would be a resource to fall back on.

Dan Throop: In favor. He and his wife have only lived here four years, but what they've seen done here in that time is astonishing. He thinks the complexities of the Town needs a more complex structure of government to handle it.

Dan Haycock: In favor, with conditions. He has been an unpaid member of the Thousand Islands School Board for five years, and they have accomplished much with no remuneration. He agrees that a Town Manager should not only live in the Town, but be on the National Board of Town Managers. Business members would rather work with a trained professional. The Town Board members should give up their salaries to pay for it. Our taxes have gone up; we have to pay several types of taxes all through the year, and now you want to pay another person with our tax money.

Supervisor Taylor said that since he has been supervisor, the Town has had an assessment revaluation, in 2008. The Town tax rate is small compared to the County, and taxes went down for 55% of properties, but mostly waterfront properties saw an increase.

Jeff Garnsey: Not in favor. He was away in the service for a long period of time. He was amazed at the progress Clayton had made while he was gone. He described how being proactive worked, in relation to how he oversaw workings on keeping submarines up-to-speed. And, Clayton is proactive. He agrees with Councilman Peterson that we maybe could use a Town Manager in the future, but we aren't to that point yet. We may get to where we need one to keep everything running smoothly and progressing.

Kelly Kittle: Had questions: Would it be a majority vote or a local law? – **Supervisor Taylor** said Majority vote, with the Supervisor having an equal vote, not a tie-breaking one. Would the position have the benefits that the other employees receive? Yes. **Councilman Cantwell** said again that they would have the opportunity to take the benefits if needed, but otherwise could take the incentive buyout.

Terry Craddock: Not in favor. The Supervisor would have to take a massive pay cut to hire a good Town Manager. Why not have, a full-time Supervisor again instead of a part-time one with a Town Manager? Why would we need two people to fulfill the same functions?

Supervisor Taylor said he was Deputy Supervisor when Bob Cantwell told him that he was going to resign. Supervisor Taylor already had a full-time job from which he wasn't ready to retire. So, he hired an assistant so he could be a part-time supervisor. When he did retire, he stayed part-time, but actually puts in full-time hours, though not all in the office. He feels there needs to be a full-time person to take care of the day-to-day duties.

Matthew Turcotte: In favor. Thanked the Town Board for holding this public meeting so that people could voice their opinions. He works with 100 municipalities to promote them. He is impressed that so many know about Clayton and want to be like Clayton. The Town shouldn't become complacent. He feels the need for the Town Manager so we don't fall through the cracks. He has to ask himself every day, and so should a Town Manager: "How can we improve?"

Phil Randazzo: In favor, with conditions. He felt that Justin was being humble; he knows he puts in a lot of hours being part-time. Bob Cantwell, Jr. was full-time, so in essence we *have* had a Town Manager. He feels we need a full-time Town Manager, but we need to spend more than \$60,000 to have a great person. As Paul Luck said, that person would have to be **fully-qualified**. The position would pay for itself if the person hired would seek efficiencies. He definitely would have to have experience in City Management. He asked the Board to first come up with a good plan; don't rush into it.

Donna Patchen: Not in favor. She doesn't understand why they need to have someone else come in if the Town already has competent people doing their jobs. Having co-run two companies, they have held accountable the people working for them. If there is extra money with the cuts mentioned, put it where it benefits the Town and the taxpayers, like roads. Creating a new position is a band-aid.

Supervisor Taylor pointed out on the flow chart that we already have outstanding department heads, and their staffs are all very good. The highway department has the largest budget and they do outstanding work.

Paul Luck said that despite his talk with the supervisor, he has heard the people and he agrees with them. (Not in favor)

Cindy Grant: Not in favor: Had very nice things to say about the Town Clerk; she does a lot of different things, and is always friendly, being the first one to meet people as they come in. She felt a Town Manager ought to live in Clayton, and will see strengths and problems.
Would this person serve at the pleasure of the Supervisor and Town Board (Yes)
The job is publicized to start in July. Is there a review process? (Yes)
Should this be an elected position? She thinks part-time sounds better than full-time.
Would the executive assistant lose any of her salary? (No.)
Would she also be assisting the town manager? (Yes)

Wanda Phelps: Not in favor. Ms. Phelps chided the Supervisor, saying he knew what he was getting into, and now it's overwhelming and he can't handle it.

Supervisor Taylor rebuked her remark saying that he takes his job very seriously, and thinks he should have the resources (of a Town manager) available. An example of areas that he would like to see worked on include: digitize a lot of the records we have that are taking up a lot of room, and then they would be more readily available, IT governance policy, and Long Term Financial Planning.

Ms. Phelps agrees with Mr. Luck that this position and whether or not to have it, should be put up for election, for ALL residents. She Foiled for job descriptions and there were none available.

Susie O'Neill stood up and said that she and Mike Casselman would volunteer to write the job descriptions at no cost.

Supervisor Taylor said he has been wanted to have a Personnel Policy manual developed, but the Town Board decided we didn't have the resources to do one.

Wanda Phelps asked if the Supervisor's \$28,000 would be reduced to \$18,500 and was told it would be up to the Board to decide that.

When do you anticipate making a decision? – At the April 8th meeting if we decide to go ahead with this plan; we would go on input from tonight's meeting. We have been anticipating a July start date for the Town Manager that is why \$30,000 was put in the Budget.

There was a continued discussion among several of the people who spoke and the Supervisor. Cindy Grant said she noticed that in the proposed Town law, there wasn't anything about the Town Manager being a Clayton resident. The Supervisor said that it would be, however he wasn't sure if it would be enforceable.

Ms. Phelps asked the Town Board if they would consider putting it up for a taxpayers vote, and if so, could there be a mailing to notify everyone? Even though announcements are put on the website or social media, not everyone is on social media.

Supervisor Taylor said to everyone that sometimes the popular decisions are easy and most of the time the right decisions are the hardest. Put faith in the Town Board you elected; talk to them, even if it is difficult.

Donna Patchen said that she thinks the Board has made up its mind already. She isn't against the position, but thinks we don't need one right now.

Cheryl Howard: Was looking at the flow chart and was concerned that the Town Attorney would only be communicating with the Town Manager. Councilman Matthews said that it's more of a conduit of communication. The Attorney would still be talking with the Board, the Supervisor and the Town Manager.

Kevin Patchen brought up again that with losing the manpower in the Highway Department and elsewhere, the \$180,000 that had been deleted from the Highway Budget last fall for this year, could be used for maintaining infrastructure.

Tricia Bannister asked a pointed question. Who wrote the job description for the Town Manager? The Supervisor said that he did, with assistance.

Another female voice from the rear of the hall stated she was **Not in Favor**, and that this is just adding another layer of government, which is not needed.

Adjournment:

Motion by Lance Peterson, 2nd by Mary Zovistoski, to adjourn this public meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Motion carried.

Kathleen E. LaClair, Town Clerk