

MINUTES April 7, 2020

Minutes of the workshop meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Durham held April 7, 2020 by telephonic conferencing at 7:30pm.

**Present, called in:** Shawn Marriott, Supervisor  
Joan Breslin, Deputy Supervisor  
Linda Sutton, Council member  
Scott Hulbert, Council member

**Recording Secretary called in:** Janet Partridge, Town Clerk

**Others called in:** Karen Terpak, Bookkeeper  
Tal Rappleyea, Attorney  
Patricia Handel, County Legislator  
Joe van Holsteyn, Highway Superintendent  
Mark Overbaugh, CEO  
David Cunningham, Building Inspector  
4 community members - Terry Borwegen, Mary Anne Letta,  
Bernard Rivers, Carmel Rustick

Supervisor Marriott called the meeting to order at 7:34pm.

Marriott thanked everyone for joining the telephonic conference meeting and having patience while everyone joined in. He explained if anyone has a question they would need to press 5\*.

Marriott read over 20 questions for the Environmental Assessment Form for the Comprehensive Plan that the board needed to answer yes or no to.

**A motion was made by Deputy Supervisor Breslin to approve a negative declaration for the 2020 Town of Durham Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Councilmember Hulbert, all in favor, motion carried.** (4 Ayes – Marriott, Breslin, Sutton, Hulbert)

Attorney Rappleyea explained it just needed to be filed in the Town Clerk's office and he will contact the state to put it up on their website.

Breslin asked about the school being sold for \$1 to Questar. She asked if we had a copy of the contract. Marriott said he met with the school's superintendent in March where he was told the school is selling the Durham Elementary building to BOCES so the building would still remain a school. He was told they would meet with the public at the Durham building to discuss the details and answer questions.

He said it was talked about how the town could take over the building. The amount of cost for upkeep of the building is not covered by the BOCES \$30,000 lease. Superintendent Weatherbee reached out to Marriott to let him know with the closure of the school, meetings have been cancelled and the vote has been pushed back to June. Marriott suggested everyone call their representatives on the school board to find out more information. Breslin asked about what the plans are for the money from the bond that was voted on a year ago that was to go towards improvements on the Durham building. She also asked how long this has been in the works. It

seems like it was very late in the process for the school to notify the Durham community. Marriott again suggested she talk to the school board members for answers.

Marriott received a blanket insurance policy for the summer recreational program. There is a copy in his office. It would be for \$444. If there is no program this year, there will be a refund.

**A motion was made by Breslin to pay the policy, seconded by Hulbert, all in favor, motion carried.** (4 Ayes – Marriott, Breslin, Sutton, Hulbert)

Marriott read a letter from the Greene County Legislature regarding concerns on reports of what are termed “backyard shelters” popping up in neighborhoods, these are prefab sheds and other small areas being set up as a temporary sleeping quarters and are being rented out. These shelters are in violation of our local building codes.

Marriott asked Legislator Handel to give an update from the county. Handel reported the legislators are remotely conferencing at every day. As of today, there have been 28 positive cases of coronavirus in Greene County, but luckily 12 of them are off the quarantine list. There have been 81 people in quarantine, but 69 have been discharged. So far Mental Health has not been overwhelmed which is a good sign. Stimulus packages for small businesses will be rolled out in about a week. There are already ones for large businesses out there. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to Handel at her email, [phandel36@yahoo.com](mailto:phandel36@yahoo.com).

Karen Rivers spoke to Marriott, Handel and the Town Board about the press release the county put out about downstate people coming from the city to their second homes here in Greene County. She asked for Handel to explain the purpose of the press release. She felt it was very negative and it was in poor choice for the county to release it. Handel reported she understood the premises behind the document, but she was concerned it would give the wrong impression. She knows they were trying to discourage people who were infected with the virus from coming up to Greene County and going to stores and public places. It was to help in the fight to contain the virus. She understands the message did not come across properly, but it was no different than several counties in the area. Marriott explained he understood why so many wanted to come to Greene County to get away from the city with the growing number of cases and that many wanted to get their families in the safety of their second homes. He explained that the issue was with those who were just coming up for the weekend and traveling back and forth from here to the city and back again. Also those who did not follow social distancing guidelines and not following the travel ban therefore they were forcing the county to speak out. He feels it is not our place to go against what the county legislature is setting forth as guidelines for staying safe. Ms. Rivers explained she was very upset with the press release because she feels that second home owners have been an important source of money for Greene County. She also feels it is a moral issue that we need to guide our residents in sharing what we have and take care of each other. Marriott reminded her that no one has run anyone out of our town. Across the county people are being asked to stay home for the safety of all.

Highway Superintendent van Holsteyn would like to advertise for bids for blacktop on the rest of Cornwallville Road. This would be reimbursed with CHIPS. They are being told that the state will look at this grant money and review it July first so he would like to get this work done

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before then. He would like to get the bid out so they could be looked at and voted on at the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**A motion was made by Hulbert to put out the bid for blacktop of the last 6,000 ft of Cornwallville Road, seconded by Breslin, all in favor, motion carried. (4 Ayes – Marriott, Breslin, Sutton, Hulbert)**

It was agreed that the bids will have a deadline of May 4<sup>th</sup> and would be opened in front of van Holsteyn, Town Clerk Partridge, and Marriott on May 5<sup>th</sup>. They will be reviewed and recommendations will be given to the board at the 7:30pm meeting that night.

Van Holsteyn reported he has not received any applications for the vacant highway job. He will wait to advertise when the office opens up again. Breslin asked if the crew was still working on two shifts and it was reported yes. Hulbert suggested having one crew start mowing the cemeteries and parks while the other crew works on roads. Van Holsteyn said he is trying to keep the crews completely separated but he will look into how to get the mowing started.

**A motion was made by Marriott to enter into executive session to discuss proposed, pending or current litigation at 8:30pm, seconded by Hulbert.**

**A motion was made by Breslin to return from executive session at 8:55pm, seconded by Councilmember Sutton.**

No decisions were made.

**Hulbert made a motioned to adjourn at 8:57pm, seconded by Sutton, all in favor, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Janet Partridge  
Town Clerk/Collector