**Regular Monthly Meeting, Colton Town Board, April 15, 2020**

**State of New York, St. Lawrence County, 94 Main St., Colton 13625**

Present: George Cayey, Supervisor Councilpersons: Katheryn Hayes

Donna Buckley, Clerk Ronald Robert

Grace Hawley

Lisa Fisher-Davis

No others present due to the coronavirus pandemic. Each Board Member was situated in the boardroom to abide social distancing and each wore facemasks.

Supervisor Cayey opened the meeting at 10:10 with the Pledge of Allegiance. A late start from the 10:00 a.m. advertised time.

Mr. Cayey asked if the Board Members had reviewed the minutes, bills and reports.

Motion # 1

**APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion made by Mrs. Fisher-Davis, seconded by Ms. Hayes to approve the minutes of the March 11 meeting.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried

Mr. Cayey stated there are no transfers to authorize.

Motion # 2

**APPROVE WARRANT # 4 AND BANK RECONCILIATION**

Motion made by Mrs. Hawley, seconded by Ms. Hayes to approve the bills on Warrant # 4 and the bank reconciliation.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried

**LEGISLATOR’S REPORT** Mr. Cayey reported he has kept in close touch with Legislator Perkins concerning the coronavirus pandemic. The four cases were recorded for Colton when actually a couple would be in Pierrepont but with a Colton mailing address. Mr. Robert stated St. Lawrence County Health Department has been checking in on the homebound and is appreciative of this. Ms. Hayes reported she has taken someone to urgent care and the only person allowed inside is the sick or injured party. It was recommended to call the rescue squad in the future. If the person is worried about a bill, our rescue squad doesn’t charge.

**ASSESSOR’S REPORT** Ms. Buckley read aloud the report Mr. Ball emailed.

* Since January 1st 2020 there has been 8 new property transfers, no new sales since last month.

• Visited 27 properties and closed out 13 site visits this month. I currently have 44 open site visits that will

carry over to the 2021 Assessment Roll.

• This month I finalized and submitted my 2020 Tentative Assessment Roll. The County is in the process of

printing out the Tentative Roll and the Change of Assessment Notices.

• Grievance Day is fast approaching. I have not yet received word from the County or the State on what, if

any, changes will be required concerning Social Distancing. I do not believe the State will push back the

date for Grievance Day. I ask that if anyone has any questions regarding Grievances that they call me

directly. I am making a list of people to call once we have information from the State on how Grievance

Day will be effected.

**SAFETY REPORT** Mr. Cayey read aloud the report Mr. Richards emailed.

We have worked very hard to supply our Town employees with as much PPE, sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer as we can possibly obtain. Masks were given to the highway and town hall members for public interactions. We are reading almost daily state and county mandates and policy changes. Between the Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent and the safety officer, we are reading and abiding by these policy changes as fast as they are coming in.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT** Mr. Cayey read loud the report Mr. Richards emailed.

8 permits this year so far. We are still issuing solo work permits and essential building permits. Concrete plants are only providing concrete to essential non-residential projects currently. The Department of State provided guidelines for Code Officers and limited their permitting capabilities and serviced them into homeland security work once again asking the CEO’s to enforce social distancing in buildings, commercial businesses and restaurants with fine schedules enforced.

**DPW REPORT** Mr. Cayey read aloud the report Mr. Richards emailed.

*Transfer Station* Transfer station is operating with a few modifications: Towns people cannot leave stuff out for people to pick through as it could transfer and spread the corona virus. We are temporarily suspending e-waste drop off at this time due to handling issues. Please retain those items until we can take them again. Do not throw them in the garbage. Also please hold oil from being dropped off at the transfer. These services will hopefully open up as soon as possible. Mike Schwartfigure and Chad Moore are alternating weeks at the transfer as well as off-weeks doing on call essential work. Thanks for their work at the transfer during this time period.

**Regular Monthly Meeting, Colton Town Board, April 15, 2020**

**DPW REPORT CONTINUED**

*Water and Sewer* Special thanks to Justin Johnson, our designated operator who is covering water and sewer operations on a daily basis during this time. We have successfully obtained our Watertown permit for sludge hauling. Pricing for hauling is still being calculated. The processing fee at Watertown is .055 cents per gallon.

*Building and Grounds* Much our outside contractors for our LED light conversion for our 2 grants are put on hold for S&L Electric. As well as our propane conversion at wellsite and the museum siding and insulation work from Bonno Construction. We will continue these contracts as the Executive orders are lifted on non-essential work being done.

Mr. Robert asked about employees taking vehicles home, is it necessary or allowed. Mr. Cayey replied it’s allowed and is in the employee handbook.

**BTI REPORT** Ms. Buckley read aloud the report Ms. Malik emailed.

* All the streams will have been treated for the first round by the end of this week, April10th.
* Portions of the Raquette River will be treated on Thursday, April 9th or Friday April 10th. Brookfield is coordinating with me.
* The new crew member was not able to take his DEC certification exams because they have all been canceled due to the COVID-19 Corona-virus. He has been working with me getting on the job training and is doing great. DEC regulations mandate that an uncertified person can only apply Bti to streams under direct, on-site supervision by a certified applicator. So we have been short-handed by one crewmember on Black fly control. The certified crew and myself have been working very hard... long days, 7 days a week to make up for it. The lack of snow and just moderately cold weather has allowed us to make good progress .
* We received the mosquito permits Friday April 3rd. DEC modified the 7-14 day notification requirement prior to the first application to allow us to start on Wednesday April 8th.
* Jason, the new crew member, can work, without direct on site supervision as a pesticide apprentice treating standing water for mosquito larvae control.
* We are all practicing social distancing on the crew. The only time we are all together is in the morning as we plan our day, and we do our best to stay 6 feet or more apart. As of Monday April 6th, I required that we all wear a mask while we are in the office. We use separate vehicles unless we have to do a drop off and then we have our faces covered. The last person out of the field for the day, sprays all the door handles, light switches, tables etc with Lysol.
* Since the office isn't being cleaned, I instructed all to clean up after themselves in the bathroom, we sweep the floors daily (which is standard practice anyway) and I mop the floors twice a week.
* So, in general at least in our corner of the world, all is going well.

**HIGHWAY REPORT** Mr. Cayey read aloud the report Mr. Hawley emailed.

* Since the last board meeting we have been mostly on emergency standby due to Covid-19. Since the beginning of the shutdown I have had one truck out on snow and ice as there was some accumulation on the hills.
* We have been working just a few men at a time sweeping and patching town roads. We also have started grading dirt roads, one man on the grader and one man in a pickup York raking.
* I do check phone messages remotely on a daily basis and on stormy days several times a day. We have also had two significant wind events and guys have been out one per truck checking for downed trees. As surprising as it sounds the last one resulted in no trees at all.
* The power broom for the tractor had been ordered prior to the virus, but delivery has been slowed. The tractor is back in canton awaiting the brooms arrival.
* All of the same chips funds that we received last year has been included in the State budget. I have not yet received the official letter from chips, but I have heard through the grapevine the state borrowed the money for Chips and it is expected to be available. There still is a level of concern regarding the initial press release and the wording exclusively regarding Chips. I do expect some level of funding and with that being said our capital road work will need to begin as normal. I do not have a dollar figure at this point but I will need to place an order for culvert pipe and aggregate for these projects. I am aware of the Towns spending freeze however this work does need to be done so we are in line for paving and ultimately spending chips money. I have no problem what so ever contacting Board members prior to any purchases or any other restrictions the board requires.
* The crew and I have talked about how we will conduct this work and provide a safe working distance if the present situation continues. We did replace a culvert yesterday on French hill road, where a large sink hole appeared late last week. We installed a road plate immediately and I called in a dig safe ticket that cleared yesterday. With the new safety guidelines from Cornell Local Roads we were able to complete the project and keep the excepted social distancing. This does cause some delays as only person is allowed to operate any particular vehicle at a time but we can work with it and the crew seems to be on board.
* You have my hand written item one agreement and I request that this be passed. This agreement needs to be inplace prior to any spending from these lines including personal services which we need to start very soon.
* Our spring street cleaning will need to be cut way back this year because of the social distancing requirements. We are planning on using the new tractor and broom to get whatever sand we can from the lawns and sidewalks swept out to the road and then we will pick it up with the street sweeper best we can.

**Regular Monthly Meeting, Colton Town Board, April 15, 2020**

Motion # 3

**SIGN ITEM 1 AGREEMENT**

Motion made by Mrs. Fisher-Davis, seconded by Mr. Robert to sign the Item 1 Agreement Mr. Hawley has sent.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried

Mr. Cayey stated he would like to see if Riverside Drive and Gustin Square could be paved if some of Raquette River Road were to wait. The Board agreed with Mr. Cayey.

**LIBRARY REPORT** Mr. Cayey reported the Library Board of Trustees have guidelines to follow also as the Library will be closed in 3 week increments.

**PLANNING/ZONING** Nothing to report, no meetings held.

**CLERK’S REPORT** Ms. Buckley reported:

* Busy with phone calls RE: how to pay taxes if office closed and is the transfer station open
* The following bills are showing unpaid and overdue can we pay them with the early bills? Johnson Newspaper 2 legal notices that I couldn’t get invoices for have finally arrived; Ricoh because if we wait, we will have to pay late fees; CDP called to say they haven’t received payment of $5,000; General Code emailed to request payment of their bill $995 due 3/1.
* James Perkins has asked twice whether he’s going to be hired to drive the summer swim bus. The Board agreed that they’ll have to wait and see.
* A retiree has requested reimbursement for portions of his health insurance. As we have past retirees he has to supply a copy of the invoice and proof of payment.
* Tax collection has been good for the most part, there are a few more “unpaid at all” at this time than usual. Taxpayers have until June 1st to pay here, after that they go to the County to pay.

Motion # 4

**REIMBURSE RETIREE ALLOWED PORTION OF HEALTH INS.**

Motion made by Mr. Robert, seconded by Mrs. Fisher-Davis to reimburse retiree the allowed portion of health insurance upon submittal of invoice and proof of payment.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried

Mr. Cayey stated he felt we should have both a hiring and spending freeze because of uncertainties caused by this pandemic. The Board agreed.

Motion # 5

**PLACE HIRING AND SPENDING FREEZE**

Motion made by Mrs. Fisher-Davis, seconded by Mr. Robert to place a hiring and spending freeze until further notice.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried

The items under unfinished and new business were skimmed over since everything is on hold.

A discussion was held regarding revenue shortage, sales tax, state aid, coronavirus, PPE’s, safety of residents and personnel.

Motion # 6

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Mr. Robert, seconded by Mrs. Hawley to adjourn.

Ayes 5 Fisher-Davis, Hayes, Hawley, Robert, Cayey

Noes 0

Motion carried, 11:24 a.m.

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Donna Buckley, Town Clerk