

Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Van Buren, held on May 18, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Van Buren Town Hall, 7575 Van Buren Road, Baldwinsville, New York.

Mr. Michael Hulchanski	Councilor
Mrs. Wendy Van Der Water	Councilor
Ms. Darcie Lesniak	Councilor
Mr. Howard Tupper	Councilor
Ms. Mary Frances Sabin	Supervisor

Absent:

Mr. Ronald Dudzinski	Councilor
----------------------	-----------

Also Present:

Mr. Rich Andino	Town Attorney
Mr. Jason Hoy	Town Engineer
Mr. Doug Foster	Highway Superintendent
Ms. Lynn Precourt	Town Clerk

Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of May 4, 2022:

Mrs. Van Der Water had two corrections, correct misspelling on page one and add “the” in 4th paragraph on page four.

078-22-000 MOTION BY Mrs. Van Der Water, seconded by Ms. Lesniak, to approve the minutes as amended.

Mr. Hulchanski – Abstain, Mrs. Van Der Water – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes

Motion Carried & Adopted

Approve Theresa Golden to attend Annual Assessor School at Cornell at a cost of \$916.00 plus meals and mileage:

Ms. Sabin said this approval is not to exceed \$1200.00 and that cost will be split with the Town of Lysander.

079-22-027 MOTION BY Mr. Tupper, seconded by Mr. Hulchanski, to approve Theresa Golden to attend Annual Assessor School at Cornell in July at a cost not to exceed \$1200.00.

Mr. Hulchanski – Yes, Mrs. Van Der Water – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes

All Ayes - Motion Carried & Adopted

Approve appointment of lifeguards for the pool for summer 2022:

080-22-039 MOTION BY Mr. Hulchanski, seconded by Mr. Tupper, to approve the following lifeguard appointments and salaries:

John Licciardello & Dan Gee will be returning head guards. They will be making \$18.50/hour. This will be John's fourth year, second year as supervising guard. This will be Dan's third year, second year as a supervising guard.

Kyler Langhorn is a returning lifeguard. She will be making \$17.00/hour. This will be Kyler's third year at the pool.

Anna Minecci, Alex Hiltbrand and Liam Sweeney are all returning lifeguards. She will be making \$16.75/hour. This will be the second year at the pool for all three of these lifeguards.

Caroline Wilkinson, Ashton Taylor, Zach Derito, McKenzie Lloyd, Lilly Rogers, Graeme Bradford, Ben Webster, Trevor Valenti, Brodie Snyder, Lauren Boyce, Sebastian Bradshaw, Elizabeth Kraynak will all be new lifeguards. They will be making \$16.50/hr.

Daniella Palumbo will be a new lifeguard. She will be making \$16.50/hour. Daniella will be our potential Aquatics Director. Upon completion of the certification she will be making \$18.50/hour.

Emma Brookins and Gabrielle Brookins will be new pool cashiers. They will be making \$15.00/hour

Mr. Hulchanski – Yes, Mrs. Van Der Water – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes

All Ayes - Motion Carried & Adopted

Mr. Hulchanski complimented Ms. Anders on moving quickly to hire lifeguards because he has heard many employers are struggling this year.

Declare surplus court copier #0551 and stand #0552:

081-22-000 MOTION BY Ms. Lesniak, seconded by Mr. Hulchanski, to declare court copier #0551 and stand #0552 surplus equipment.

Mr. Hulchanski – Yes, Mrs. Van Der Water – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes

All Ayes - Motion Carried & Adopted

Councilor Committee Reports & Comments:

Ms. Lesniak scheduled a Personnel Committee meeting for May 25, 2022 at 4:30 pm at the Town Hall.

Ms. Lesniak scheduled an Economic Development Committee meeting for June 1, 2022 at 5:00 pm at the Town Hall.

Mr. Hulchanski complimented the Building and Grounds Department on the tree removal in the park after the recent storm.

Mr. Tupper said he and Mrs. Van Der Water attended the Planning Board meeting where they talked about the Crego Farm development and said he thinks they are on the right path.

Supervisor Comments:

Ms. Sabin said Canton Street is tentatively scheduled to close on June 6th and Brickyard Road closure July 16th for the Canton Street Bridge replacement. She said Slate Hill is the contractor and it's nice to see a local company in charge of a local project.

Mr. Foster said he has been told there is an extended wait time for the steel and he will check to see if those are still the dates for road closure and report back to the Board.

Citizens Comments:

Ms. Mary Crego said she has been approached by neighbors about placing a stop sign at the intersection of Cross Country Drive and Sun Meadows Way. She said she explained that stop signs cannot be used for speed control and instead offered to request additional sheriff patrols in the area as a deterrent.

Ms. Amy Stewart, Tappan Street, says she lives in the "old Crego house" and purchased it in 2005 from Bill Crego. She said she spent time talking with him then about the Native American artifacts found on the farm and the findings of previous excavations in 1987 and 1997. She said this land had been farmed by the Crego family for 150 years and Mr. Crego wanted it to remain farmland but understood his children would need to make that decision. She said she respects the Crego family but has held documents for over a year that show mishandling of information and the public needs to understand what occurred prior to the zone change.

Ms. Stewart said Ms. Crego, as Town Supervisor, signed an Environmental Impact Statement on August 3, 2005 that rezoned over 26,000 acres of land and her acres were hidden in this. She said in that document Ms. Crego made false claims for financial benefit. On page five of the document the question is asked if the change will affect agricultural resources and she checked "no". On page 16 of the document, it asked if there would be an impact on historic and

archeological resources and again she checked, “no”. This includes land within or partially contiguous to a site listed on the State or National Register of historic places. Ms. Stewart said Ms. Crego knew the house was on list of historic places. Ms. Stewart said Ms. Crego knew checking “yes” to any of these three things would cause a red flag. This form is dated August 3, 2005 and a public hearing notice to propose the zone change was held on August 16, 2005.

Mrs. Stewart said we know this public hearing was held because it is why we are here. This was an egregious misuse of power for personal gain and profit that affected over 26,000 acres of land and her acres were hidden within those 26,000 acres, so the plan had begun. We bought the house, a couple weeks later Mr. Crego moved to Syracuse Home and three months later he passed. It was time to move, put the plan into action and I don’t know if at the time Claude Sykes was the Deputy Supervisor, I’m assuming he was because he is the one who took over. There is corruption that goes back a long time.

Mrs. Stewart said that corruption is happening now, the traffic study is inaccurate, the archeological information is going just the way the Planning Board wants it to but that is not the way the State sees it. After the study was done they said they have concerns about impacts to culturally sensitive areas. She said at the informational meeting with Brolex last March it was said that the artifacts were only about 85 years old. She said when when the surface survey was done the artifacts were from the 1800s. But, when studies were done in 1987 and 1997 where they did Phase 3 studies and actually dig they found three longhouses. She said artifacts in 1987 dated to 2500 B.C. some of the first Iroquois land is in our backyard.

Mrs. Stewart said Mr. Gonyea, Onondaga Nation representative, identified a lull or a mound that he identified as a possible burial site but a Phase 3 study would need to occur before any construction can happen on that site.

Mrs. Stewart said there is a bill on its third reading which means it will go to the Assembly in New York State that would protect unmarked burial sites. These sites would include areas with human remains but also those items associated with people, such as beads, pottery, etc. She said this is sacred land and we would be building on a cemetery. Would we go down to the one by the river and just plow through that cemetery?

Mrs. Stewart read a letter from the State that said this site represents the largest Iroquois Village along with Seneca River in the State. She said the only reason it has never been developed is because of the Crego family. They have farmed this land for 150 years. She asked if we are willing to take valuable, fertile land and develop it, in this market and when we are importing food? It doesn’t make any sense. But this is how things get pushed through local government because all it takes is a vote. And it’s interesting now that Claude Sykes is retired he is on the Planning Board which will make the recommendation to the Zoning Board to change it to a possible PUD which would give Brolex the ability to do whatever he needs to do.

Ms. Sabin said she will have the Town Attorney review the EIS and who developed it before Mrs. Crego signed on behalf of the Town. She said she will look into it but doesn't believe Mr. Sykes was on the Board in 2005. She said this is not a done deal, the sale is contingent upon approvals and nothing formal has been done to date. There have been only informal discussions with the developer.

Mrs. Stewart said Mrs. Crego may have had attorneys or whoever but it doesn't matter. This involved her family's land and she was Town Supervisor so there is a conflict of interest.

Mrs. Stewart said it is important for the community to understand that once it goes to a public hearing, we get a chance to complain, but if it gets voted on to the Zoning Board 90% of the time it is going to happen. It will happen quickly because many people have heard that the deal is done. The first time I approached Claude Sykes about this in February 2021 he laughed at my archeological survey, he said you've got nothing, the deal is done.

Ms. Sabin said there is no deal; there is a potential sale.

Mrs. Stewart said there is a confidence and an arrogance that this will go through.

Mrs. Stewart asked if the action in 2005 is found to be unethical if the land will revert back to agricultural.

Ms. Sabin asked Mr. Andino if the Town can refuse to review a project.

Mr. Andino said no, that's the point of the process, review, gathering information, going through the SEQR process, weighing it on the merits and how it conforms to the town's code. You can't just refuse an application, you have to go through the process.

Ms. Sabin said she will have the attorney review this and when we get it back we will update you.

***Attorney Review: Crego Property was zoned R-40 in 1994, not 2005. EIS statement in 1994 signed by then Supervisor Edward Hallenbeck.

Mrs. Stewart said it is important to bring it back up and important to note that if this was corrupt and was not ethical as far as lying on state documents that a proposal to zone it back to agricultural should occur.

Mr. Tom Shaw, 2227 Tappan Street, said he is concerned about changing the zoning to PUD because that could bring in apartments or other uses besides residential and he is not in favor of that. He said the Board should not be discussing any changes until they review the petition from

Regular Town Board Meeting May 18, 2022

the people who don't want to see the land developed. He said Brolex says there is a big demand for housing, but that is low income housing and he doesn't want to see that here. He said he could live with current zoning with houses on all lots.

Mr. Shaw said as far as suing the town, you can say no on the basis that the people don't want it. He said the threat of litigation should not be considered. Your job is to do the will of the people not the corporate bottom line.

Mr. Shaw said we need agricultural land in this country. He said we import 51% of our wheat and we are literally eating ourselves out of house and home. He asked the Board to think about all of this before you vote.

Mr. Andy Bowes said the Board should make sure there is clear communication with the developer on this project since he is developing another one in town too.

Engineer Comments: None

Attorney Comments: None

082-22-000 MOTION BY Ms. Lesniak seconded by Mr. Hulchanski, to adjourn to the next Regular Town Board Meeting on June 1, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Hulchanski – Yes, Mrs. Van Der Water – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes

All Ayes - Motion Carried & Adopted

Meeting closed 8:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Precourt
Town Clerk

Dated: 5/20/22

