

**TOWN OF WESTERLO
TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP
OF
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2014**

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held a workshop meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2014 in Town Hall located at 933 County Route 401, Westerlo, NY. Supervisor Rapp opened the workshop at 7:02 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ATTENDING WERE: Supervisor Rapp
Councilman Sherman
Councilman Bichteman
ABSENT WERE: Councilman Field
Councilman Lounsbury

Also attending were: Deputy Supervisor Edwin H. Lawson, Town Highway Superintendent Keith Wright Sr., Zoning Board member John Sefcik, Town Clerk Kathleen Spinnato and four residents.

Councilman Bichteman reported at the last Town Board meeting the Town Board had talked about implementation as described in Local Law # 1-2014 an Extension of the existing Moratorium on Hydrofracking. The purpose of the extension being to review Zoning and make recommendations to address hydrofracking, he suggested forming a committee to do this and since Ed Lawson is the most familiar with the Zoning Law he serve as the committee chairman. The Town Board needs to provide a clear list of objectives or an outline to the committee. The committee's proposed Zoning recommendations have to address the Town Board's position on hydrofracking; any proposed changes to the Zoning must be approved by the Town Board.

Councilman Bichteman asked the Board members present for the number of persons they felt were appropriate for a proposed committee. Supervisor Rapp responded a total of five members.

Councilman Bichteman said there may be certain things that may be prohibited or unenforceable that should not be included in the Zoning. We need to talk with the Town Attorney or in conjunction with another attorney more familiar with hydrofracking as has been previously suggested by a resident in the past, this way any proposed Zoning changes developed would be enforceable and legal.

Councilman Bichteman reported unfortunately there are two absent Board members tonight that need to be aware of what we are thinking, we can communicate through a possible email, so that each will need to develop their own outline or list of objectives for the proposed committee.

Councilman Sherman asked if Mr. Lawson would be willing to Chair the proposed committee. Ed responded he would under the conditions that the outline developed by the Town Board was passed by the majority of Board members. Councilman Bichteman reported any Zoning changes proposed would need to pass the hearing process and eventually the approval of the Town Board.

Mr. Lawson asked about the length of time of the committee. Councilman Bichteman suggested a potential minimum six month period of time in which the Town Board would need a committee report back by, this would give a necessary cushion of time before the one year expiration of the moratorium.

Mr. Lawson asked about how the committee members would be selected. The potential selection process by which committee members would be selected advertised or volunteers was briefly discussed by Councilman Bichteman he indicated in fairness there should be a cross section of persons, he could think of several persons immediately who may be willing to volunteer.

Ed Lawson responded as long as the charge of the committee is outlined by a clear direction he would serve as Chair to a committee. Councilman Bichteman advised this is all purely discussion at this workshop and will be subject to motion and approval of the Town Board at a regular meeting.

Discussions followed pertaining to:

- Selection process for the committee members.
- Any Town Board member who wishes to serve on the proposed committee has the opportunity to do so.
- Who would be the person(s) making the decision of who is chosen for the proposed committee.
- Committee workshops to be held on preferably Wednesday evenings.
- A potential committee recommendation report due date to the Town Board for possibly February.
- Poll all Town Board members at the next regular meeting to see if they favor a ban or not on hydrofracking.
- Provide the proposed committee with a list of recommended Zoning changes to consider: truck traffic, storage facilities, air pollution, compulsory integration if applicable, permit process, etc.

A brief discussion followed concerning compulsory integration and Limited Liability Corporations.

The Town Clerk asked the name of the proposed committee. Councilman Bichteman responded a name has not been determined, Councilman Sherman suggested naming the proposed committee the Zoning Recommendation Committee (ZRC). The committee will be volunteer with no salary.

Each Town Board member needs to compile a list of Zoning recommendations by the next Town Board meeting for the proposed committee.

Councilman Bichteman asked how the process for the bids for building repairs to the highway garage were coming. Ed Lawson indicated he had not received the final documents in the mail yet and he reported the following:

- Walk through is scheduled for Aug. 28th
- Potential for receiving bids back by: Sept. 10th Town Board meeting

Councilman Bichteman asked if the doors at the Town Hall building would be included. Ed Lawson believed they would be included under grant funding instead. Discussion followed pertaining to other items that need to be repaired or improved at the Town Hall from grant funds. A list of priorities were provided: heating system, insulation, soffits, pointing of brick, front porch, doors, repair of steps, etc.. Discussion followed about the need to establish a priority list by the next meeting, grant funds, and the need to move forward on this project.

Councilman Bichteman discussed the situation with the accounting firm. He has reviewed their original proposals. Their original proposal he feels were generic, costs are bordering on excessive, the Town was asked to change to Quickbooks, and no Quickbooks training was provided, and some departments which should be included are not being addressed. In the past, those dept. records were reviewed and a letter was provided to the Town stating the dept. accounts were in order, this was then recorded in the January organizational minutes. Their contract for renewal will be coming up and this needs to include more details. He indicated that he has no concerns with their professional accounting skills.

Ed Lawson advised on the bid for the garage he will forward to the Town Board members the companies who have requested the specifications. The specs are also available on CD. It will be advertised in the Altamont Enterprise for two weeks, the Times Union, and in the trade papers.

Councilman Sherman indicated they will need to plan for financing for the potential building projects and how it will be handled.

There being no further business Councilman Bichteman made a motion to adjourn the workshop, Councilman Sherman seconded the motion, motion carried by those present. Workshop adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Spinnato

