

August 10, 2020 the regular town board meeting was held in the Town Hall with all members in attendance. Highway Superintendent, Rick Hobus was absent. Supervisor Ferguson leads the pledge to the flag. A motion to accept the previous month's minutes was made by Coun. Wilbur and was seconded by Coun. Barber, and all were in favor. A motion to pay the audited bills was made by Coun. Raymond and was seconded by Coun. Greenough, and all were in favor.

Old Business: During last month's meeting the board agreed to have an air conditioner put into the judge's chambers for the comfort of the court. However, they are on back order and out of stock and we hope to be able to get something for them soon. Coun. Raymond began a discussion about the Justice Grant that is available to the courts. Sup. Ferguson responded that the courts have been closed due to COVID-19 but will request the court clerk keep an eye out for any information that may come up. The grant is available to the court system only and only a small amount would go to the town.

New Business: The financials were given to the board and are on file in the clerk's office. The 2017 AUD will be submitted in September. **Resolution #11-2020** titled **Tall vs. Town of Dresden** was given to the board. A motion was made by Coun. Wilbur and second by Coun. Raymond to move into executive session at the end of the meeting to further discuss the issue. An update for the FOIL request was given by the clerk. Ms. Stipins-Gang was looking for all billing from the town attorney associated with the Article 78 filed against the town. Ms. Stipins-Gang was given what information was on hand by the clerk and a copy of the resolution transferring monies to the attorney line item. Ms. Stipins-Gang requested information about the short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals for the town as well as the fund balances and the clerk responded to her that there has been no request on behalf of the OSC to supply those goals and that a copy of the letter given to Sup. Ferguson from senior teller Sarah Denison from Community Bank listing all account balances was also forwarded to Ms. Stipins-Gang. Hudson Wireless put in a portable drive to test portable towers. Sup. Ferguson will be working up a bill amount to charge the town residents to use them. We are working on three locations for the towers to be placed. One being the fire house, another to be at South Bay, and another still located on the north end of town. We have to pay to have them here. If people switch to another service they will lose money for their investment. It was suggested by the members of the board to discuss all avenues with the attorney before moving forward.

George Gang requested to be put on the agenda for the meeting and he addressed the board about the lack of financial responsibility as well as the lack of communication between the Town, the Town Board, and the citizens of the Town of Dresden. He went on to explain that an official FOIL request was made on behalf of his wife, Ms. Stipins-Gang, in regards to the 2013 AUD's remitted by the Supervisor. Multiple times the response was due to the document rejected by the state and changes were made and the document resubmitted. She filed a FOIL and three appeals to get an answer and no reply was given. An Article 78 was filed against the town to force an answer. During that time the town responded that there was no record of why the initial AUD was rejected and a FOIL was placed to the Office of the State Comptroller by Ms. Stipins-Gang and the response from the state the document was not rejected by the state and later amended by the town's filing. In the end, Ms. Stipins-Gang won the lawsuit and the following statement was given to the public: "That the Town of Dresden should have followed FOIL with regard to the August 2019 FOIL request of petitioner Anda Stipins-Gang." There was never given a reason for not answering the FOIL, a waste of both money and time on something that should have been handled during the first request with a few sentences and about five minutes of time. A new FOIL request was filed with the Town in June, 2020 asking for current account balances, current fund balances and any short-term, mid-term, and long-term planning. It was only partially answered. Balances showed \$884,000 over four accounts. Considering the town collected \$808,000 in taxes for 2020 and that we are only seven months into the year, the town is in very good financial shape. Why are some of these monies not put into interest bearing accounts? As for the Town's fund balances no response was given. How can future planning be done if you don't know what monies are available? Does anyone on the board know what a fund balance is? How can a budget be made without these numbers? As for the question on planning for the future the response given was that the supervisor did not receive any request from the state for this information. This is only technically correct. The last two audits done by the state required that the Town of Dresden have a written plan for the short, mid, and long terms. The town council knows this because they were present for the last audit summary. This observation shows a great need for more open government by the Town of Dresden. Why does it take a FOIL request or a lawsuit to get required information from this Town? We can do better than this.

County Business: None

Highway Superintendent's Report: None

Public Comment: Ms. Stipins-Gang wanted a reason why the town was able to violate town law. A legal committee made up of Supervisor Ferguson and Councilman Barber allowed an Article 78 to be filed on the Town. She also inquired about why has Councilman Raymond brought up about the justice grant for 8 years and nothing has been done about it. We can do better, locally as well as at the county level. This Town Board doesn't want to take anything on. Stiling Knight brought up about women proving they are being treated as second class citizens and how they are being overlooked as contributors to the election process. Millions of level-headed women elected a good candidate. Also, he discussed that if the public school doesn't open its doors for the 2020-2021 school year there will be a considerable drop in the finances necessary to operate the school and wondered if it was possible to get a refund on some of the tax dollars being collected to operate for the session. And lastly, the protestors that are rioting in the streets are behaving like radical terrorists and are acting as an uncivilized movement that should be reacting to the fact that people have been blinded and something should be done.

Christine Diekel asked about the previous month's minutes and why she can't see them on the town website before the meeting. It was replied that the minutes can't be posted until they are passed at the next month's meeting so they are running one month behind on the website. She also said that she is thankful to be able to express her opinion during the meetings each month. Anda Stipins-Gang again reminded that board that it is necessary for the Records Access Officer to have access to town records and files when the supervisor is unavailable.

A motion was made to enter into executive session by Coun. Greenough and was seconded by Coun. Wilbur at 7:38 p.m. A motion to return from executive session was made by Coun. Wilbur and was seconded by Coun. Greenough at 7:47 p.m.

Resolution #11-2020 titled **Article 7 Challenge in Matter of Tall vs. Town of Dresden** was made by Sup. Ferguson and was seconded by Coun. Wilbur. A roll call vote was made and is as follows: Councilman Barber-NAY; Councilman Wilbur-AYE; Councilman Greenough-AYE; Councilman Raymond-AYE. The resolution passes 3-1 and was adopted August 10, 2020.

No further discussions and a motion to adjourn was made by Coun. Wilbur and was seconded by Coun. Greenough at 7:50 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Marcinda Wilbur, Town Clerk.

Attendance: Matt Saari, Whitehall Times, Stiling Knight, Christine Diekel, Linda Barber, George Gang, Anda Stipins-Gang