

TOWN OF GHENT
TOWN BOARD MEETING
May 21, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Town Board was held May 21, 2020 via the "Zoom" online meeting platform Supervisor Benvenuto opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Present were: Michael Benvenuto	Supervisor
Charles Wood	Councilman
Koethi Zan	Councilwoman
Patti Matheney	Councilwoman
Mallory Mort	Councilman
Ben Perry	Highway Superintendent
Matthew Cabral	Attorney for Town

MOTION #1 TO OPEN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT made by Councilman Mort, seconded by Councilman Wood and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

Resident Judy- With the severe weather causing trees to fall, had the understanding that the Town Highway does not assist to remove trees on private property. Is this still true, if so why did I see and Ghent Highway truck on private property removing a tree?

Superintendent Perry- It is up to the discretion of the Highway department if the tree has to be removed for safety. If this was on Konig Road, the tree was reported to the Town by the Sheriff's department for safety issues and was removed due to severity of the situation.

MOTION #2 TO CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENT AND OPEN THE MEETING made by Councilman Mort, seconded by Councilwoman Zan and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

MOTION # 3 TO ACCEPT THE TOWN BOARD MINUTES FROM APRIL 16, 2020 made by Councilwoman Matheney, seconded by Councilwoman Zan and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

MOTION # 4 TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA made by Councilwoman Matheney, seconded by Councilman Mort and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

PLANNING, ZONING AND COMMITTEES:

Climate Smart- Councilman Mort reported the Town of Chatham will begin charging for the charging stations. Is this something Ghent is interested in, if so he will explore the option for the Town of Ghent?

EMC update from Dave Newman- Two meetings have been held, committee working on a proposal to have the County Supervisors to support and agree to become a Climate Smart county. Currently there are nine towns and 2 villages that are Climate Smart. Expecting a round table discussion with CEDC to define a mission for EMC.

Broadband- Mid Hudson received a large grant to expand Broadband service. Local residents have already seen improvement.

Ghent Historian- Reported 6 mill visits and submitted his report to the Board.

YOUTH, PARKS, RECREATION:

Discussion was held regarding summer camp this year. With limited resources available, i.e., no swimming, busing, field trips and multiple safety concerns the Board is considering an alternative virtual camp versus traditional camp. The camp director has submitted a proposal for the Board to review.

MOTION # 5 TO CANCEL TRADITIONAL CAMP AND REVIEW VIRTUAL CAMP AS A POSSIBILITY made by Supervisor Benvenuto and seconded by Councilman Mort and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

HIGHWAY:

First I would like to say we are all doing well and healthy. We are following the guidelines to the best of our ability which has some challenges for sure. Each crew man has been issued multiple masks along with cleaning supplies throughout the facility. Each person has been issued daily a separate vehicle to travel to and from garage to job site. We have been very busy doing shoulder and ditch work which are the two least costly and productive things the Highway Dept. can do to save money and keep everyone busy. With doing so much shoulder/ditch work it creates other challenges for me as to where to get rid of all this waste material we have moved over 800 tons of waste in the last 3 weeks. We have also been doing pipe replacement projects that I had scheduled for this summer with many more added to an ever on going list. We also cleaned our entire yard reorganized and removed waste. We will be beginning the 2020 mowing season shortly to have the first round done by the 4th of July. Right now all of our major paving jobs are on hold the state has not released the Chips funding which was scheduled to be done May 15 now we are told possibly June 15, nor do we know if we will have enough sales tax to cover what we budgeted for this year. We are not going to know much more about our tax revenue until the end of June mid-July I am told only 2 Towns are doing any major type of paving and they both had the money set aside last year in full to cover the cost. Dump Body is pushed off till August.

I am doing everything in my power to conserve the money I have to make it through this year. My goal is to keep everyone of my guys employed and health insurance covered. I have been crunching numbers for weeks. I am conservative on a normal day but now I am even more. We still have to operate and certain things still must be done. We will be doing some black top patch work but not near as much as we normally do.

NEW BUSINESS:

Picantes of Chatham, (former Destino's) has asked the Town Board to waive the 30 day advance notice required to apply for a liquor license for the premises.

MOTION # 6 TO WAIVE 30 DAY ADVANCE NOTICE FOR PICANTES made by Councilwoman Matheney, seconded by Councilwoman Zan and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Matheney, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

Councilwoman Matheney recused herself from the meeting at 7:44pm for the continued Nexamp proposal.

Nexamp proposal – Cory Auerbach, Rod Morrison and Alex Curlin joined the meeting.

Nexamp submitted to the Board Zone Shift Concept map, and sample deed restriction declaration and a description of the fiscal benefit of the proposed facility.

First, the proposed C-1 commercial area was reduced from 28.4+/- acres to 16.7+/- acres, by limiting the rezoning to the land directly surrounding the solar array.

An equal amount of existing C-1 zoned land on the parcel is now proposed to be converted to RRA-1, to offset the change. As a result, there will be no net change to the overall area of the C-1 or RRA-1 zoning districts

Additionally, since the purpose of the rezoning is to authorize the development of Old Mill Solar B, NexAmp would agree to a condition, restricting the new C-1 Commercial area to use as a solar energy system only, as memorialized in a Declaration of Restrictions .

Supervisor Benvenuto- The deed restrictions stay with the property unless approved by the Town. Simplified, description of what type of property is being switched out.

Rod- parcel of upland, trees suitable very similar to each other.

Councilman Mort- proposed land suitable for farming and or there any other pieces of C1 that can be shifted?

Corey- not much more.

Councilwoman Zan- if project B can't move forward can project A go forward? And what are the economic benefits for both projects.

Nexamp submitted a fiscal projection benefit including a PILOT for review. Can't answer about each project moving forward without the other.

Councilwoman Zan- where is the shifted parcel in relation to the Airport?

Councilman Mort- across from north end of runway.

Councilwoman Zan- Clarification on process from Attorney Cabral.

Attorney Cabral- When the Board is ready, it then can be sent to the planning board for review and comments. Should be seen in format the board is comfortable with. Refer for comments and return to Town Board. Refer as is or refer both proposals for review.

MOTION # 7 TO SEND BOTH PROPOSALS AND BOTH ITERATONS OF MAPS TO PLANNING BOASRD FOR COMMENTS AND OPINIONS made by Councilman Mort, seconded by Councilwoman Zan and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 4 Benvenuto, Wood, Mort, Zan

Nays: 0

The Board thanked Nexamp for their time, they left the meeting and Councilwoman Matheney rejoined the meeting at 8:24 pm.

PAYMENT OF AUDITED BILLS AND ACCEPTANCE OF MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT:

AUDITED BILLS:

General A \$17428.80

S.L. \$735.21

General B \$2637.08

Highway DB \$24731.62

TOTAL: \$45527.71

MOTION #8 TO PAY ALL AUDITED BILLS AND ACCEPT THE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AND RADIFY APPROVAL PAYMENT OF APRIL BILLS made by Councilman Mort seconded by Councilman Wood and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Zan, Matheney, Mort

Nays: 0

PULBIC COMMENT:

Craig Simmons- Concerned about making Zoning changes, may open a can of worms for others seeking the same. Not objecting to solar projects, but regulation. Consider guidance form the ZBA and Planning Boards.

MOTION # 9 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING 8:31 PM made by Councilman Wood, seconded by Councilman Mort, approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Benvenuto, Wood, Zan, Matheney, Mort

Nays

Respectfully Submitted, Michelle Radley Town Clerk

