

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---JULY 8, 2025—7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—TOWN HALL

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck, Councilman Brian Ryther, Councilman Scott Fickbohm, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde
Residents: Florence Loomis, George Knarich, Robert Schenfeld

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the minutes for the June 10, 2025 regular monthly meeting as drafted.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith reported that there are more issues with the 2018 Freightliner. It is out for repairs, but the new body shop manager has readjusted the repair estimate to include more repairs with the total being about \$180,000.00. Now we have to go back to the insurance company and see what they will do for us. It is most likely we will not have the truck for the upcoming winter. The tentative paving date is August 4th. If it keeps on raining, we will save the \$12,000.00 to \$15,000.00 that is budgeted for dust control. The new mower has been ordered. The steel siding has been ordered for the salt shed. Supt. Smith noted he may want to install a few lights inside and outside the area. Turnbull Bridge repairs and the new deck are completed. They will pave it when they do the other paving. He is waiting for a new lease agreement for using the new County radio tower. Employee Barry Braunius will be retiring September 23, 2025. He will try to find a new employee. He advised that he did get some gravel put down by the park access road.

George Knarich was concerned that we have a part-time employee who has medical issues. Supt. Donald Smith advised that the employee has been cleared to work and has to pass an annual physical to keep his CDL. Mr. Knarich further noted that the guy from Coyote Park Campground was interested in a job with the Town. Supt. Smith noted that he had talked to him and told him to come pick up an application.

Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson noted that repair costs to date are at \$32,650.00 including the towing bill. She is still tracking mileage, with the newer trucks being cheaper to operate. The NYS DOT has completed inspections of our bridges. Councilman Brian Ryther asked if we had any word on the bridge inspections, but Supt. Donald Smith advised that he didn't expect to hear until October unless there was a major flag.

Florence Loomis noted that after she got a new driveway culvert, the blacktop that had to be dug up wasn't replaced and there were mounds of gravel, possibly from sanding. Her blacktop guy told her that the Town should replace the blacktop at the end of the driveway. Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that it has never been Town policy to replace any blacktop material when installing culverts. Supt. Donald Smith will go look at the situation to see if they can smooth things out for her. Robert Schenfeld questioned if the insurance should have also covered the towing charges for the 2018 truck. Supervisor Lentz will check with our insurance agent.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy noted that there is a Broadband Survey on the County website under the Planning Dept. which residents should consider completing. If the state has America 250 funds, the County should be eligible to get some. NYSAC is conducting a survey of healthcare benefits. She noted that the County may consider having various plan options available. They have adopted plans and procedures for filming in the County to be ready to help draw in projects. Because of the approved Federal bill, the County will see costs shift to them. They will have to absorb 25% of administrative costs for the SNAP program which is \$1.8 million. Medicaid shifts

will also impact the County with the removal of healthcare provider fees. It will be worse for low income people and more costs for Counties. It will also add stress to the struggling rural healthcare system. Rep. Kennedy advised that she got appointed to the Otsego Lake Watershed Advisory Commission. The towns/villages around the lake will work on a plan to protect the lake.

DCO Keegan Holt has purchased a large crate that the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets directed him to do. There have been issues with a dog running loose in Garrattsville. The owner was found and the dog returned. The owner posted disrespectful and bigoted remarks on social media about the DCO. If the dog continues to get loose, the dog will be picked up and brought to the shelter as it is unlicensed. Supervisor Edward Lentz is working on getting a signed contract with Silver Streak Kennels for shelter services, who we are now using. Because they won't hold dogs past the 5-9 required days, we will need to have a contract with the Susquehanna SPCA to take the dogs once the holding period is over so they can be adopted out. The Board reviewed the transfer agreement from the SSPCA and a motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the transfer agreement with the Susquehanna SPCA at a cost of \$300.00 to \$500.00 per dog handled.

The solar installation will begin next week on the town hall. It is hopeful we will still be able to get the tax credit. NYSEG had a press release where they advised that electric costs will be going up because money is needed to build up their infrastructure. Councilman Scott Fickbohm reported that he has not got any prices for purchasing our own rugs for the town hall or for power washing the town hall. Reps from Wharton Creative came out to see where a new town park sign would go. They advised that we need to replace wood on the sign frame and they have reworked their price for a new sign to \$669.95. A motion was made by Councilman Scott Fickbohm, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the purchase of a new town park sign from Wharton Creative for \$669.95. Councilman Fickbohm noted that he has three names of contractors that he will contact about getting an estimate for a generator for the town hall. He hasn't ordered the end caps for the playground. Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that we had budgeted money for new tables, chairs, a dehumidifier and new refrigerator. With the high humidity in the building the dehumidifier is the high priority. It was also discussed that if we are successful on getting the grant for the basketball court and the backstop that we should look into getting a grant for a new playset.

Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that he is still working on getting the phones converted to cable lines. He is hoping for activation next week. He noted that while we are excited to have small businesses start up in the town, there are several who have not gone for Site Plan Review. In general, if a business is going to have customers on site, they are required to go for site plan review. Without a Land Use Enforcement Officer, Supervisor Lentz will send out emails and post on Facebook reminding residents of this requirement if they start a business. After noticing that our sales tax revenue was behind last year's amount, Supervisor Edward Lentz contacted Otsego County Treasurer about the decrease. Co. Treasurer Allen Ruffles advised that because Edmeston and Burlington underwent a revaluation, which raised the absolute value of their assessments, and are at 100%, it pushed our relative amount of sales tax revenue down. We were at 2.7% of all town and village assessed values and now are at 2.5%. Our equalization rate is at 78% this year. This is definitely another reason for doing a revaluation in the next few years, which will cost about \$100,000.00. Supervisor Edward Lentz suggested to the Board that we put more money into our "ear-marked" accounts for a reval, comprehensive plan, bridges, and equipment. He will look further into setting up formal reserves. Fund balances would decrease if the "ear-marked" funds were put into formal reserves.

Monthly financial reports were reviewed by the Board. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 1 Abstention (Councilwoman Woodbeck) to transfer \$95.00 from Contingent Account

#A1990.4 to Justice Contractual #A1110.4 to cover a bill. The Board audited the bills prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #103 to #110 for a total of \$1,455.16 and Highway Fund bills #69-84 for a total of \$57,533.53. Supervisor Lentz paid General Fund bills #100 to #102 for a total of \$397.85 with prior Board approval. Highway fund bill # 85 for the grader bond payment for \$11,023.25 is set up to be paid electronically.

This month the Board reviewed the Procurement Policy, Investment Policy and Best Value Procurement Law. The Hwy. Committee had recommended a few changes to the Procurement Policy. After review, a motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the proposed changes to the Procurement Policy. The Investment Policy is okay as is, just needs to be retyped. No changes were suggested for the Best Value Procurement Law. Next month the Board will review the EEO policy, sexual harassment prevention and work place violence policies. A motion was made by Councilman Scott Fickbohm, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 5/0 to approve the changes to the wording in the Playground policy as was discussed last month.

Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck noted that she had just received an email about the upcoming JCAP grants. She noted that she was trying out a transcriber to record the meeting for use in preparing minutes in the future.

Councilman Brian Ryther noted that Gerry Fuchs on Pegg Road had made efforts in cleaning up things at his property. With no more business or comments, the Board adjourned by acclamation at 9:35 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk