

**TOWN OF NORTH EAST  
TOWN BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
MAY 14, 2020**

**Councilpersons present:**

Supervisor Christopher Kennan  
Councilman Ralph Fedele  
Councilman George Kaye  
Councilman John Midwood  
Councilwoman Lana Morrison

**Councilpersons absent:**

*The May 14, 2020 meeting was held via Zoom web conference. Supervisor Kennan and Councilman Kaye were present at Town Hall. Councilmen Fedele and Midwood and Councilwoman Morrison were in attendance from other locations via the Zoom web conference.*

**Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance:**

Supervisor Kennan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:**

Supervisor Kennan asked Clerk Wheeler for a roll call of Town Board Members.

COUNCILMAN FEDELE:	HERE
COUNCILMAN KAYE:	HERE
SUPERVISOR KENNAN:	HERE
COUNCILMAN MIDWOOD:	HERE
COUNCILWOMAN MORRISON:	HERE

A quorum was present.

Supervisor Kennan read the following:

“Welcome to the May 2020 meeting of the North East Town Board. I am participating remotely from Town Hall. With me in the same room, safely spaced apart and wearing their masks, are Councilman George Kaye, and our Budget Officer Lorna Sherman.

First, a word of appreciation to everyone for dealing with our current situation with such good humor and patience. These are trying times for everyone. I would like to make note of this week’s issue of the Millerton News, and their lead article as well as their editorial, regarding mental illness. I thought it was a great article, and it noted that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. In the past the Town Board has issued a formal proclamation about this. I don’t feel that we have to issue a proclamation for everyone to acknowledge the challenge which this COVID-19 pandemic is creating, not just for our physical health, or our economic well-being, but for our mental health and stability as well. I’m glad the weather is getting warmer and sunnier, that helps.

I was on a conference call with County Executive Marc Molinaro earlier today, to discuss the much-anticipated start of re-opening our economy. Dutchess County is being dealt with as part of a group of seven counties, including Westchester and Rockland, collectively referred to as “Mid-Hudson”. The degree to which we are being permitted to start opening up economic and social activity in Dutchess County is determined by how this Mid-Hudson region is doing with 7 health care related metrics. Such as the rate of decrease in COVID hospitalizations, the decline in the death rate, the percentage of hospital beds available, and so on. Mid-Hudson region passes 5 out of 7 of these metrics, which is good, but not good enough to re-open. Our county is being penalized, to some degree, by being lumped in with this Mid-Hudson group. Because there are

obviously big differences between Dutchess County and Westchester, or Rockland. Nevertheless, Marc Molinaro was cautiously optimistic that at some point next week, Dutchess County should be able to move into Phase I of the re-opening. Phase I will permit all construction and manufacturing activity to go forward, along with curbside and in-store pick up for retail stores, as well as certain recreational activities. Including fishing, golf, and tennis. And let's not forget, drive-in movie theaters. The Four Brothers were very far-sighted!

This is encouraging news for us in Millerton and North East. We have been fortunate to have the lowest incidence of coronavirus in Dutchess County, although that may just be a reflection of having had less testing up here than in the towns along the Rte 9 corridor. I don't want to minimize the threat that this dangerous virus holds for each of us. But like everyone, I just can't wait to see more people being able to a job, out in the streets, enjoying our town, and socializing. It won't be overnight, we all know that, but it needs to happen.

OK, on to our agenda.”

**Acceptance of Agenda:**

**RESOLUTION #0972020  
Acceptance of Agenda**

**RESOLVED**, to approve the agenda.

Motion by Councilman Kaye and seconded by Councilwoman Morrison.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)

NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**Department and Committee Reports:**

**Police** – No police report.

**Highway** – Superintendent Stevens stated the contractor started the salt storage building construction yesterday and it continued today with the excavation and everything seems to be moving along well.

At this time, two crew members are at work every day. One crew member is scheduled for 20 hours a week.

**Assessor** – Assessor Johnson stated the office has been conducting business near normal. Answering calls is a little slow since they are not in the office. The Assessor has been working from home and the Assessor's Clerk has been coming in to the office. Much of the office work was done through e-mails. The 2020 tentative roll has been completed and has been posted and published online making it available for review on the County's website. There is a link on the Town's website at the Assessor's page.

The Assessor has extended office hours to include Saturday, May 16 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; Wednesday, May 20 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; and Tuesday, May 26 from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

The Board of Assessment Review is ready to hold its 2020 Grievance Day on May 27 during the hours of 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The hearing for this year will be held by remote conference using Zoom. The meeting will be open to any complainant who wishes to speak to the Board and the general public. An announcement will be posted on the Town's website with instructions on how to receive a link for that meeting. The Board of Assessment Review asks that all complaints and documents be mailed in a few days early for distribution. Any information and forms needed are available through the Assessor's Office.

**Planning, Zoning & Building Dept.** – Reports were provided to the Town Board

**Town Clerk** – Clerk Wheeler indicated the reports were submitted to the Town Board.

**Committee Activity** – No committee reports.

**Renewal of Junk Yard, Benwood Knolls, and Scenic View Trailer Permits:**

Clerk Wheeler submitted copies of the applications and inspection reports for Thomsen & Graham Metals, Inc. and Scenic View Mobile Home Park to the Town Board.

**RESOLUTION #0982020**  
**Renewal of Junk Yard and Scenic View Trailer Permits**

**RESOLVED**, to approve the permits for the junk yard and Scenic View Mobile Home Park.

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilwoman Morrison.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)  
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**Memorial Day Proclamation:**

Supervisor Kennan stated there is a Memorial Day Proclamation every year. The Proclamation will be read at the Memorial Day Event. There is not likely to be a regular celebration as in the past due to the inability for people to meet in numbers. The Legion will conduct a very small event in the cemetery and is waiting for further guidance from the County on what other activities can take place.

**CAC Report on Pollinator Garden:**

Mary Lynn Kalogeras spoke on behalf of the CAC regarding the pollinator garden. The garden is about 20 x 30 feet with a border and is located by the post office. The pollinator garden will be a habitat for bees, butterflies, and birds. All of the plants are native to the area. There are four phases of development. The first phase was the removal of the sod. The second phase is to enrich the soil. Volunteers are needed and urged to contact her via e-mail. The third phase is planting the plants. The last phase will be maintenance. Signs will be posted to highlight the features of the garden.

Ms. Kalogeras will provide a report next month and will continue to report until the garden is complete.

**Revised Town Hall Procedures and Protocols for COVID-19 Pandemic:**

Supervisor Kennan read excerpts from a memo sent to the Town Board, Town committees, and employees.

Town Hall will continue to be closed to the general public. Exceptions would include necessary delivery, maintenance, and cleaning personnel.

Masks must be worn when entering or leaving Town Hall and when moving around in Town Hall.

To the greatest extent possible, Town Hall offices should be occupied by only one person at a time. If urgent business requires two people to be in the same office for a brief period of time, they should both be wearing their masks.

Employees are responsible for keeping their workspace clean and sanitized on a daily basis.

In the interests of preventing transmission of the coronavirus, employees are discouraged from moving around Town Hall any more than is necessary and especially from entering each other's offices. Communication between units of Town government can and should be done via email as much as possible.

These are protocols from the County and are reflected in other towns.

Employees are instructed to stay home if they do not feel well and to report any possible symptoms of COVID-19.

The Clerk's Office, with its proximity to the front door of Town Hall and with the open door from the hallway into the office, is a particular concern. Supervisor Kennan spoke with Dave Shapiro who is prepared to make the Clerk's door into a Dutch door. The mail slots, which hang on the back of the door of the Clerk's office, will be moved upstairs to the room with the server and postage meter. The Town will also look into the possibility of having a drop box or window slot where documents can be passed between individuals.

The Court will remain closed to the public until further notice. The Court Clerk will be returning part-time to process limited paperwork. Reopening of the Court and scheduled sessions will be in accordance with the advice and guidelines of the Office of Court Administration.

Supervisor Kennan asked for feedback from the Board.

Councilwoman Morrison stated the procedures and protocols look straight-forward. She asked where the window or drop box would be located. Supervisor Kennan mentioned two possibilities with one being in the Clerk's office and the other was the window in the main entrance. First the volume of paper needs to be established. There could be a call-ahead procedure established to leave papers for someone without the need to enter Town Hall.

Councilmen Fedele and Midwood liked the Dutch door conversion for the Clerk's office.

Bill Kish stated the kitchen and the bathrooms are likely points of transmission for viruses. He recommended removing all the kitchen utensils and other items from the kitchen and to use it only for a hand-washing station. He also suggested locking the bathrooms so people can't use them. Supervisor Kennan stated the Town is relying on guidance from the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral Health for our facility and the population within Town Hall has been reduced. The employees can be asked to avoid those areas and have the opportunity to wear gloves and use sanitizer that has been placed throughout Town Hall.

Councilman Midwood stated the policies will serve the Town well. If there are going to be people at Town Hall, the bathrooms need to be open.

Councilman Kaye asked if anyone will be allowed upstairs. Supervisor Kennan stated Town Hall is closed to the public in general, at least until Memorial Day, but maybe moving forward after that time.

**Approval of Minutes from 4/16/2020:**

**RESOLUTION #0992020**

**RESOLVED**, to approve the minutes of April 16, 2020.

Motion by Councilman Fedele and seconded by Councilman Midwood.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)

NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**Supervisor's Report:  
Budget Adjustment –**

**RESOLUTION #1002020  
Approval of Budget Adjustment #2 of 2020**

**RESOLVED**, to approve Budget Adjustment #2 of 2020 as follows:

In A Fund – General Town-wide, there is an expense increase of \$10,000 minus an expense decrease of \$10,000 with a net of \$0.00.

Motion by Councilwoman Morrison and seconded by Councilman Kaye.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)  
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**Monthly Bills Abstract/Special Abstracts –**

**RESOLUTION #1012020  
Approval of Special Abstract Dated April 28, 2020**

**RESOLVED**, to approve Special Abstract, dated April 28, 2020, totaling \$619.05, broken down as follows:

A Fund -	\$455.39
Payroll T&A -	\$163.66

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Fedele.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)  
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**RESOLUTION #1022020  
Approval of Abstract Dated May 14, 2020**

**RESOLVED**, to approve Abstract, dated May 14, 2020, totaling \$74,328.43, broken down as follows:

General A Fund -	\$47,658.13
General B Fund -	\$197.57
Special Unemployment -	\$498.00
DB Fund -	\$20,691.39
Capital Projects H1	\$5,084.68
T&A2 Escrow	\$35.00
Payroll T&A	\$163.66

Motion by Councilman Fedele and seconded by Councilwoman Morrison.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)  
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

**Voucher Committee for June 2020 –**

The Voucher Committee for June is Lana Morrison and John Midwood.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment.

**Adjournment:**

**RESOLUTION #1032020  
Adjournment of May 14, 2020 Meeting**

**RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Kaye.

AYES – 5 (Kennan, Fedele, Kaye, Midwood, Morrison)

NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on May 14, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Gail J. Wheeler  
Town Clerk

Approved: 06/11/2020