

**TOWN OF NORTH EAST
TOWN BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 13,2022**

Councilpersons present:

SUPERVISOR CHRISTOPHER KENNAN
COUNCILMAN RALPH FEDELE
COUNCILMAN JOHN MIDWOOD
COUNCILMAN GRIFFIN COOPER

Councilpersons absent:

COUNCILWOMAN LANA MORRISON

The January 13, 2022 meeting was held via Zoom web conference. Meeting information was posted on the Clerk's board, the website, and the local post office board.

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.

Acceptance of Agenda:

Motion by Councilman Midwood, and seconded by Councilman Fedele .

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)

NAYS – 0

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

There were no public comments.

At 7:03 p.m. Supervisor Kennan welcomed Councilman Cooper to his first Board Meeting, and looking forward to meeting in person at future meetings. The Covid-19 local numbers are “off the charts”. Hope is that the positivity rates are peaking. The Town has received two installments of free home test kits from NY State, via Dutchess County. We received 40 in the first batch and 80 in the second. Kennan worked with the Village Mayor Najdek and Village Clerk Kilmer to distribute them at the Village hall and at the American Legion. He wanted to thank the Legion, especially George Lind and Sean Klay for their help. More test kits will be coming soon. Kennan will let people know when he is notified of a date. Meanwhile the Town hall is still open to the public, but by appointment only. The Emergency Operations Plan with the Village is being worked on and updated. As far as the Wastewater district, Tighe and Bond are working on getting revised cost estimates. Once that is done then we can talk to owners of parcels within a proposed district. A key question is whether the district should extend only as far as Kelsey Brook or along “Boulevard East” to the Connecticut border. It will be discussed with the Planning Board and Zoning Review Committee.

Department and Committee Reports:

Police – The Police report will be posted on the Town website.

Highway – Superintendent Bob Stevens shared that his men were working on equipment, and that they had plenty of sand and salt in stock. Supervisor Kennan mentioned that the last phase of the new highway garage construction would be going out to bid at the end of the month. Recent test drilling on site encountered no bedrock.

Assessor- There was no assessors report

Planning, Zoning & Building Departments, and Town Clerk- Monthly reports were given to the Board members for review.

Committee Activity

Police Services Committee- Councilman Fedele reports that the committee met on January 6th on Zoom. Some progress was made. They discussed response time to 911 calls and cost of services. There was community feedback. The Committee is working on a schedule for a future meeting as well as a mission statement. Councilman Fedele shared at the meeting historic perspective and looks forward to any feedback.

Highway Committee- Anticipates going out to bid at the end of January.

Zoning Review Committee- No report

North East Broadband Access Advisory Committee Report-

Committee Chair Rick Stalzer explained that the Town Board formed this committee a while back to gather data on internet access in the community. Last November they sent out a survey both online and on paper, in English and Spanish. It was widely distributed and they had 175 responses. He still feels like they gained limited knowledge, but could see where some problems areas are. He estimates that 5% of the Town do not have any access. Recommendation was made to hire a \$4000 service that would follow every cable line to every house. The hope is that the infrastructure plan included in the federal Build Back Better Plan would include help to communities for just such a service.

Supervisor Kennan addressed that there is a real need for people to have good internet, especially children in and out of school, and those that are home with multiple family members trying to get access at the same time. We have come to depend upon it. He promised to take a good look at the proposal and to put the report on the website.

Councilman Cooper asked a question as to the viability of a municipal fiber network.

Resolution Regarding Senior Exemption Request Renewal:

Assessor Johnson was invited to speak to explain how Governor Hochul weighed in last month, in light of rising Covid numbers, the vulnerability of seniors, and an approaching deadline of March. The executive order will allow seniors to not have to submit a reapplication, and to continue with what they have on file if nothing has changed, versus going through the annual reapplication process. Johnson stated that there are a significant number of low income seniors in our Town who would benefit from this exemption. She would still be able to take any steps to follow up on changes, such as deaths, moves, or sales of property.

Town Clerk Strauss read the following:

RESOLUTION #062022

**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE TOWN ASSESSOR TO GRANT
SENIOR CITIZEN EXEMPTIONS ON THE 2022 ASSESSMENT
ROLL IN ACCORDNCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 11.1**

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul issued Executive Order No. 11, declaring a State disaster emergency for the entire State of New York due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, this State disaster emergency has resulted in limited hours in municipal offices in the Town of North East and rendered senior citizens and individuals with disabilities residing in North East homebound. These factors combined have made it difficult, if not impossible, for many in these populations to file their real property tax exemption applications in person and many, further, lack the ability to file such applications online; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the above problems caused by the pandemic, Governor

Hochul issued Executive Order No. 11.1 on December 26, 2021, thereby extending Executive Order No. 11. This extension of the Governor’s Executive Order modifies subdivisions 7, 7-a and 8 of section 459-c of the Real Property Tax Law and subdivisions 5, 5-a, 5-b, 5-c and 6 of section 467 of the Real Property Tax Law, the effect of which permits the governing body of an assessing unit (i.e., the Town Board of the Town of North East) to adopt a Resolution directing the Assessor to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all property owners who received such exemptions on the 2021 assessment roll (i.e., senior citizens and individuals with disabilities with limited income), thereby dispensing with the need for such persons to file renewal applications to request such exemptions, and further dispensing with the requirement that assessors mail renewal applications to such persons; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 11.1 further allows the governing body of said assessing unit, in any such Resolution, at its option, to include procedures by which its Town Assessor may require a renewal application to be filed if she has reason to believe that an owner who qualified for the exemption on the 2021 assessment roll may have since changed his or her primary residence, added another owner to the deed, transferred the property to a new owner or died; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to said Executive Order, the Town Board of the Town of North East wishes to adopt such Resolution directing the Town Assessor of the Town of North East to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all eligible senior citizens and individuals with disabilities with limited income, and granting the Town Assessor of the Town of North East the authority to require renewal applications for due cause, as discussed above, utilizing procedures outlined below.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the authority granted by Executive Order No. 11.1, issued by the Governor of the State of New York, that the Town Board of the Town of North East hereby directs the Town Assessor of the Town of North East to:

1. Grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all individuals who received the senior exemption on the 2021 assessment roll and all individuals who received the exemption on the 2021 assessment roll because they were recognized as a person with disabilities and limited income, thereby dispensing with the need for any such individuals to file renewal applications for such exemptions, except that;
2. The Town Assessor may, in his or her sole discretion, require a renewal application to be timely filed with his or her office if he or she has reason to believe that any such individual, who qualified for the aforementioned exemption on the 2021 assessment roll, may have since changed their primary residence, added another owner to the deed for the relevant property, transferred such property to a new owner or died. If the Town Assessor requires such renewal application be filed, she shall notify the owner of the subject property of such requirement by regular mail, with such notice shall contain instructions on how to file the renewal application. Said renewal application may be returned by mail or by making an appointment to drop same off at the Town Assessor’s office, 19 North Maple Avenue, Millerton, New York 12546.

This motion was offered by Councilman Fedele and was seconded by Town Board Councilman Cooper.

SUPERVISOR KENNAN	Voted Aye
COUNCILMAN FEDELE	Voted Aye
COUNCILMAN MIDWOOD	Voted Aye
COUNCILMAN COOPER	Voted Aye

The Resolution was carried by a 4-0 vote of the Town Board members on January 13, 2022.

Approval of Standard Work Day and Reporting Resolution:

RESOLUTION #072022

Approval of Standard Work Day and Reporting Resolution

RESOLVED, to approve the Standard Work Day and Reporting Resolution.

Motion by Councilman Morrison and seconded by Councilman Fedele.

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was/ was not adopted on January 13, 2022.

Public Comment period:

Assessor Johnson clarified that Resolution #062022 only applies to resident low income seniors, and that all other exemptions still have to be filed by May 1.

Sam Busselle asked if the Zoning Review Committee had a chance to review their presentation made at the December 9th Meeting and join with the Village to hire a consultant to investigate and revisit our local zoning to reflect the equity and income concerns of the area.

Supervisor Kennan responded that we did not have a chance to talk with the mayor or with members of the board yet.

Supervisor's Report: .

Budget Adjustment –

The Bills were reviewed by the Board

RESOLUTION # 082022
Approval of Budget Adjustment #9 of 2021

RESOLVED, to approve Budget Adjustment # 9 of 2021 as follows:

A Fund – General Town-wide, there is an expense increase of \$ 6321. minus an expense decrease of \$ 6321, resulting in a net of \$0.

B Fund – General Town Outside, there is an expense increase of \$751 minus an expense decrease of \$751 resulting in a net of \$0.

DB Fund- Highway Town Outside, there is an expense increase of \$5000, minus an expense decrease of \$5000 resulting in a net of \$0

Motion by Councilman Fedele and seconded by Councilman Cooper

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on January 13, 2022.

Monthly Bills Abstract/Special Abstracts –

RESOLUTION #092022
Approval of Special Abstract

RESOLVED, to approve Special Abstract, dated December 28th, 2022 totaling \$10870.53, broken down as follows:

A Fund - \$ 2264.49
DB Fund - \$ 8606.04

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Fedele

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on January 13, 2022.

RESOLUTION #102022
Approval of Abstract

RESOLVED, to approve Abstract, dated December 31, 2021, totaling \$55,868.52, broken down as follows:

A Fund -	\$15,850.59
B Fund -	\$3,177.02
DB Fund -	\$34,542.21
Escrow T&A2 -	\$ 2,298.70

Motion by Councilman Cooper and seconded by Councilman Fedele .

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on January 13, 2022.

RESOLUTION # 112022
Approval of Abstract

RESOLVED, to approve Abstract, dated January 13, 2022, totaling \$ 44,470.03, broken down as follows:

A Fund -	\$ 35,145.40
B Fund -	\$350.00
DB Fund -	\$8,606.04
Water District SW1 -	\$ 120.00
Payroll T&A -	\$ 248.59

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Cooper .

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Resolution was adopted on January 13, 2022.

Voucher Committee for February 2022 – John Midwood and Lana Morrison.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings:

The minutes of December 9, 2021;

Motion by Councilman Fedele and seconded by Councilman Midwood .
AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

The Minutes of organizational meeting January 2, 2022.

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Cooper .
AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)
NAYS – 0

Meeting with Counsel: Not needed.

Adjournment:

Motion by Councilman Midwood and seconded by Councilman Fedele

.

AYES – 4 (Kennan, Fedele, Midwood, Cooper)

NAYS – 0

Respectfully submitted,

/s/: Tilly Strauss
Town Clerk

Approved : 2/10/2022