



Town of Tusten Town Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

August 8, 2023

6:30 PM

Zoom ID # 890 1678 4280

Venue: Tusten Community Hall, 210 Bridge Street

PRESENT

Supervisor Bernard Johnson
Councilman Greg Triggs
Councilman Kevin McDonough
Deputy Supervisor Jane Luchsinger

OTHERS PRESENT

Crystal Weston, Town Clerk; Victoria Strumpfpler, Deputy Town Clerk; Leigh Delaney, 3rd Deputy Town Clerk; NWS Interim Superintendent, David Bunce

ABSENT

Councilman Bruce Gettel

1 OPENING ITEMS

1.1 **Call Meeting to Order**

Supervisor Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:32pm

1.2 **Pledge of allegiance**

Supervisor Johnson led the pledge.

1.3 **Presentation**

Becky Simms from RCAP – Sewer Rate Study PowerPoint Presentation

[00:02:25] *"we're a rural development organization that provides services to help build capacity in small rural municipalities, specifically as it relates to our wastewater systems. And so tonight here, I'm going to be presenting some information about a rate study that I've been working on for the Harrisburg Sewer District. So the reasons for conducting this study are as follows The sewer district here serves about 800 individuals. There's 295 customers, and that gives us about 424 billing units. Some commercial customers have more than one billing unit, so that's the difference there. The annual charge is \$456.40 per billing unit per year. And that rate has not changed since at least 2009. And that is really what's driving us to do this study, is the town is interested in having some more fairness built into that rate structure such that customers who use less water and therefore produce less wastewater would be paying less than users that produce more wastewater would be paying more. But most importantly, the goal is to stop those revenue shortfalls from happening, because, of course, that's not sustainable for the town. And it definitely doesn't put the town in a good position to be able to prepare for the capital projects that will be necessary for the sewer system. So a summary of the financial situation. So as I mentioned, the the base rate is just a single base rate per billing unit and there's no per gallon rate currently. The last three years, the sewer district has had net income losses. This is a summary of those losses. And I also want to point out that also in the last two years there have been \$0 put towards capital contributions, even though it was in the budget because of the revenue shortfall. That was one of the things that didn't get spent for the year. So the town is not has not been able to prepare for those needs. The good news is that there's not long term debt currently. Right. So you're not only borrowing money currently, but that's in part due to the fact that some pretty major needs exist out there."* [00:04:40][135.1]

Additional revenue and in some substantive amounts need to be generate consumer fees for the system to be able to not just cover the existing operating and operation and maintenance costs, but to be able to prepare for the future needs of the system. Projected rates that would change in the calendar year 2024.

1.4 Payment of Bills

RESOLUTION # 93 - 2023

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On the motion of Deputy Supervisor, seconded by Councilman Triggs the following resolution was,

ADOPTED 4 AYES 0 NAYS ABSENT 1 (Councilman Bruce Gettel)

RESOLVED that the Town Board to pay the bills as presented:

Fund Acct	Ck Disburse	Voucher #'s
General	\$43,839.15	495, 500-510
Highway	\$47,379.66	511-519
Water	\$16,220.31	486-499
Sewer	\$16,484.55	470-485
Lighting dist	0.00	
Escrow Accts	0.00	
Capital General	0.00	
Capital Highway	\$249,188.30	
Capital Water	\$30,897.50	
TOTAL	\$404,009.47	

2 **DIVISION REPORTS**

2.1 Highway Department – *Submitted by Donald Neiger, Highway Superintendent*

- Used 1049.1 gal of diesel fuel; 929.1 gal was for highway and 120 gal was non- highway use.
- Used 305.7 gal of gas; 0 was highway.
- Patched holes on dirt and paved roads.
- Removed trees in road-way from storms, & repaired wash outs.
- Ditch Hoffman, Mahls Pond Rd and Weber Rd.
- Replaced pipes on Hoffman Rd, and Mahls Pond Rd.
- Graded dirt roads.
- Mowed grass on the right of way.
- Paved Hoffman Rd. with help from Suit-Kote.

2.2 Water & Sewer Department- *Submitted by the NWS District*

- Tested wells and sewer plant daily to ensure the drinking water and wastewater quality met federal and state standards. Adjustments made as needed.
- Completed monthly drinking water sampling, wastewater sampling, reporting for the DOH and DEC.
- Took an annual distribution sodium sample.
- Did water meter readings every Wednesday in the month of July and contacted home and building owners with unusually high water use to help them track leaking pipes or fixtures.
- Mowed at the sewer plant, Wells #1, #2, and #3, and Kirk Rd.
- Koberlein pumped-out and cleaned sludge from the dosing tanks at the sewer plant.

- Responded to one afterhours call of a water in the basement of a home on Bridge St. Turned water off and identified where leak was coming from. Was able to isolate leak and turn water back on for the rest of the home.
- Responded to an afterhours call of a high level at Kirk Rd pump station. Tested the floats and reset the panel and everything continued working. High flows from a storm caused a float to get hung up and the pumps wouldn't turn on by themselves.
- Responded to one power outage at the sewer plant. Made sure generator were operating and reset flowmeters. Power was out for 7 hours.
- Pulled weeds and removed sludge from the sand beds at the sewer plant.
- NYWRA helped us smoke test part of the sewer system, in the areas of Kirk Rd, Feagles Lake, Hickory Ln and Oak St, and the easement between Kirk Rd and Route-97. Did not observe any smoke. Preformed some manhole inspections.
- Responded to an afterhours call of water in the yard of a house on Delaware Dr. Tested the water to confirm it was a water leak. Shut water off at the curb and the leak stopped, which is on homeowner's end.
- Inspected and marked with GPS the new sewer lateral for 20 Oak St installed at the bridge construction site.
- Located and marked water lines by Well #3, Feagles Lake, and the Kirk Rd easement to Fort Delaware and several more curb valves/sewer laterals on School St/Grove St for the surveyor working on the water district upgrade.
- Installed meter and turned water on to 1 home.
- Installed some new pulleys and spindles on the Brush Hog.
- Preformed 2 deck installation inspections to make sure they were not over septic tanks/laterals. One of them was.
- Responded to 11 UDIG NY ticket requests for sign installations on Bridge St, Kirk Rd, and Route-97.
- Replaced 1 broken radio head.

NARROWSBURG WATER & SEWER	
FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JULY 2023	
Narrowsburg Water	
Water Metered Rent	\$ 35,978.27
Service Charge	\$ 175.00
Water Penalty	\$ 190.50
TOTAL RECEIVED	
\$ 36,343.77	
Narrowsburg Sewer	
Sewer Rent	\$ 27,979.86
Service Charge	\$ 70.00
Sewer Penalty	\$ 182.56
TOTAL RECEIVED	
\$ 28,232.42	
GRAND TOTAL	
\$ 64,576.19	

Jocelyn Strumpfler
Water & Sewer Clerk

2.3 Building Department/ Code Enforcement

Town of Tusten Building Inspector's Report *JULY 2023 Monthly Report*

Construction Inspections – 18	Complaint/Violation Inspections – 0
Fire & Safety Inspections – 0	Certificate of Compliance Issued – 11
Certificate of Occupancy Issued – 0	

Total Permits Issued – 19

New Homes – 0	Accessory Building/Garage – 2
Renovation/Alteration/Addition – 4	Camping - 1
Chimney/Fuel – 1	
Acc Bldg Comm – 0	New Comm Const – 0
Ren/Alt – Comm Const - 1	
Deck – 0	Commercial Deck - 0
Demolition Permit – 2	Driveway Permit –
Electrical – 2	Logging Permits – 0
Mechanical – 1	
Plumbing – 0	Pool – 0
Roof Replacement - 3	Roof Structure - 0
Septic Permits – 1	Sidewalk - 0
Sign Permit – 0	Solar Permit – 1
Well – 0	

Permit Renewals - 0
Flood Plain Permit – 0
Abstracts/Violation Search – 3

Dangerous and Unsafe Building – 0	
Complaints Received – 0	Complaints Closed – 0
Violations Issued – 0	Violations Corrected – 0
Previous Violations Closed/Corrected – 0	Stop Work – 0

Monies collected by this office from July 1, 2023 to July 31, 2023 are **\$2,861.00**

Respectfully,
Jim P Crowley, Building Inspector
JPC/js

2.4 Assessor – Submitted by Kenneth Baim, Sole Assessor

During the month of June, the adjustments were made to the tax roll following the grievance board adjudication. Basically, there were no changes that would change the roll totals. All addresses, tax escrow and exemption information were updated to the latest known values and it was transmitted to TeleAScent.

The roll was published for July 1st. There has been one small claims hearing petition received from Adventine Properties. A trial date has not been set at present time.

New deeds, addresses, tax escrow and exemption information has been keyed in. This is in preparation of the roll being submitted for school tax bills by August 15th.

We did not attend the June Sullivan County Assessors' Association meeting as the location was not accessible for Ken and Peg had another commitment. Ken attended the July meeting. It appears there were no noteworthy topics to report from either meeting.

Peg has successfully completed three certification courses: Fundamentals of Assessment Administration; Cost, Market & Income to Value Course I & II. Based on course offerings, she anticipates attending two more courses before the year ends.

2.5 Upper Delaware Council – Submitted by Evan Padua

Over the past 6 weeks there have been 5 confirmed Northern Snakehead fish caught in the Upper Delaware north of Narrowsburg. These invasive fish species thrive in back eddies and calm water along the sides of the Delaware River. If an angler is to catch one, they are asked to kill it and report it to the National Park Service, NYDEC, or PFBC.

The UDC is seeking nominations for the 35th annual River Valley Awards Banquet "We want the entire river community to be involved in the nomination process" Laurie Ramie, Executive Director of the UDC. Awards are as follows:

- Distinguished Service Award
- Robin M. Daniels Memorial Life-saving award
- Community Service Award
- Cultural Achievement Award
- Outstanding Community Achievement
- Partnership Award
- Volunteer Award
- Awards of recognition
 - Please email Laurie@upperdelawarecouncil.org or stop in the UDC office across the street to Nominate individuals.

Next full Upper Delaware Council meeting is September 7, 2023, which is open to the Public and will have Jennifer Carfagliano presenting on the new status of the Delaware River Aqueduct Shutdown, and reservoir drawdowns.

2.6 Energy Committee – Read aloud by Supervisor Jonnson

- NYPA is troubleshooting the gateway for communicating with the streetlights
 - This is the reason they are not functioning properly
 - Once resolved, they can complete the decorative lights
- On Aug. 8th the subcontractors were on Main St. to replace two in operable lights
- With installation of the parking lot lights on Main St., NYPA has achieved completion of the project
 - A punch list and substantial completion list was forwarded to the Town to sign off
 - At this time, the old-style lights were found to have been missed
 - LED installation and NYPA will have that rectified
- Jen Porter continues to work with the Sullivan Catskills Zero Waste Food Security Expansion Project (includes relocation of the HORSE)

- The move date for the HORSE is set or August 24th, 2023
- In order to bring back the abandoned plastic collection program, Tusten Social is partnering with Jessica Weiss of Growing SOUL and redistributing boxes in Tusten.
 - The locations are: Pete's Market, Tusten/Cochecton Library and the Post office
 - Tusten Social & Tusten Youth will integrate its programs with the kids and recycling

2.7 Zoning Revision Committee

- In progress
- No report

2.8 Conservation Advisory Committee – Submitted & Read aloud by Deputy Supervisor Jane Luchsinger

The committee has not met recently. We are waiting for information regarding our grant application for an Open Space and Recreation Plan from The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The awards are due to be announced in late August/September

2.9 Narrowsburg Water & Sewer Committee – Submitted & Read aloud by Deputy Supervisor Jane Luchsinger

The Water/Sewer committee met August 7th at 8:00 am.

1. The committee reviewed the Sewer Rate study presented by Becky Sims of RCAP Solutions.
2. The committee reviewed the Lead Pipe Inventory grant proposal written by Delaware Engineering.

2.10 Grants – Submitted & Read aloud by Deputy Supervisor Jane Luchsinger

- Little Lake Erie Culvert – A Construction update meeting with Hunt Engineering, NY DOT and Rutledge Excavating took place this month. It is expected that the pre-formed dam/culvert will be arriving August 8.
- Water infrastructure project – The project continues to be coordinated by Delaware Engineering. A new funding opportunity has been identified to perform an inventory to locate any lead pipes in the system. Delaware engineering will apply for this grant in our behalf.
- Pavilion project is ongoing (discussion later in meeting)
- Waiting for word on the Delaware River Basin Restoration Grant for the purpose of creating an Open Space Plan all of Tusten.
- The final report for the UDC grant for zoning updates will be submitted this week.
- A new UDC grant application will be submitted for the purpose of partial funding of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

2.11 Tusten Youth Commission – Submitted by Crystal Weston, TYC Chair

- Weekly programming every Wednesday continues
- Preparations for Halloween are underway
- Kalahari indoor waterpark Nov 10 & 11 still has a few rooms
- 50 TYC kids went to the Wayne County Fair
- Tusten Social/Tusten Youth (TSTY), Youth Club put on a great show at River Fest

3 PUBLIC COMMENT – the following from the public made comments

- Marie Vaz (Narrowsburg Beautification Committee Chair) – would like to use the town parking lot for their annual Plant Swap
- Star Hesse - I want to thank whoever is responsible for the expanded and informative Agenda items. And to whatever Town agent that cleared the fallen tree in the municipal parking lot at the Library and Peck Memorial Garden.

Since full disclosure of public comments rarely (if ever) appear in meeting minutes after the fact, I am submitting a written list of recurring questions that have gone unanswered month after month, meeting after meeting. I am submitting this for inclusion in the written record to be answered by the Town Council.

Star D. Hesse NBG resident

- Status of LED lights on Main Street 6+ on all the time, one not working at all. Correct for light and stop excess charges to Town electric bill for the 6+ lights on all the time. Was provider NYPA contacted to address and correct this situation?
- What is the status of the WIFI installation on LED lights, what areas will be covered and what is the projected start date for this service?
- What is the status of the request for Town provided ADA compliant, public toilet(s) on Main Street or elsewhere in accessible locations in Town?
- Eugene Wolf – water/sewer questions and clarifications
- Fabiana Lotito - there was an analysis on the revenue which was great, but is there an analysis on the cost
- Iris Helfeld – how does having a well compare Town Water and Sewer?
- Brenden Kenny – own a house that was built in the early 1950s and recently had to replace my septic system for \$19,000
- Star Hesse – what were these \$50,000 repairs and where did that money come from?
- Bernie Lohmann – commented on uniqueness of the sewer district and how it discharges waste. Questioning how it will function in the future and how it will be financially sustainable.

OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Park Pavilion

- Bid Documents – received / Set return date for submissions/Award

3.2 Park Pavilion Public Comment

The following comments were made from the public:

- Eugene Wolf – I see the need for shade but its just difficult to understand the size
 - 100% ADA compliant
 - How did Carl, the architect, get this? Was this assigned via RFP process?
 - Against any business or commercial leasing/renting of the structure
 - Question regarding Floyd Campfield completing a project that is 3, 4 years old?
 - Asked for clarity for use and scope of the kitchen, same for toilets?
 - Questioned creating a paid position for maintaining kitchens and toilets
 - Overflow parking at the lumber company
- Iris Helfeld – this is a residential area, don't commercialize a residential area and change the entire environment
 - I am all for shade, picnic tables but when it comes to a bathroom, no
- Anthony Lombardo – a toilet, unattended in a very quiet rural area is a magnet for crime, drugs, homeless and many more
 - The police aren't going to babysit
- Valerie Gregoretti – I am across the street the area proposed for the parking lot, and I don't want to look at cars all day
 - We all enjoy a beautiful view
 - How does this effect property value on the flats?
- Doreen Kraus – I have lived next to the playground on the flats since 1966
 - I'd like to see the garden poles taken down
 - Maybe just a small metal roof for just some shade because people can't stay down there in the summertime, it gets so hot and some more garbage cans
 - Questioned Dirlam's parking lot
- Bernie Lohmann – this is not a gazabo, this is a barn
 - The size is just ridiculous
- Naomi Holoch – the trees have been cut down

- That walkway is just ridiculous
- There should be a viable, contemporary, comprehensive plan
- Pavilion is just too large
- Jill Fruchter – pavilion and shade and maybe water fountains are great ideas
 - Visual coherence and functional completeness
 - Benches next to rusty trash cans, a half-finished walkway, plantings not maintained, severely under used exercise trail
 - Would be helpful to evaluate how park is being used and that the changes reflect need
 - The two main points are visual coherence and functional completeness, it would be helpful to see renderings
- Cass Collins – Spoke about up keep of the park (Central Park Conservancy was formed to take care of Central Park in NYC) Spoke about Chi Hive becoming an amazing asset to the town
 - I see this as a good thing not a big cooperate entity taking over
- Denise Jungblut – we have had this discussion before about doing the multigenerational park and it was big beautiful pavilion but the same problem, it is too big, we do need some shade
 - The Chi Hive does a great job, we use the park for certain activities and need to be mindful of signing up
 - Should be used by children and adults, everyone should come down and enjoy it
- Iris Helfeld – Chi Hive is a benefit to the community, could use the walkway if it was contiguous, an open pavilion makes sense and will be used by everyone to enjoy the flats, the residential flats
- Marcy – Larry’s Mom- concerns regarding maintenance and upkeep of the pavilion and monitoring noise at events

3.3 Park Pavilion (continued)

- The Board took a look at the Pavilion drawing/plans
- Discussion was held between the Board members, Harvey Wiseman and Crystal Weston; Tusten Youth Chair
- Lisa D’Andreas chimes in about the park in Bethel

No action taken

Recessed discussion to 8/23/2023 @1:00pm

3.4 93 Main St

- Roof repair – 3 QUOTES needed
- awaiting quotes two more quotes

3.5 210 BRIDGE St.

- A/C Drain for existing – Olsen Mechanical is supposed to get back to the Supervisor when they will repair the drain
- 1st Floor unit – awaiting Olsen Mechanical
- Dehumidifier for basement – one quote received

4 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Narrowsburg Beautification Committee

Requesting use of the parking lot on 10/07/2023 for a plant swap

RESOLUTION # 94 - 2023

NARROWSBURG BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

On the motion of Deputy Supervisor, seconded by Councilman McDonough, the following resolution was,

ADOPTED 4 AYES 0 NAYS 1 ABSENT

RESOLVED the Town Board granted permission to the Narrowsburg Beautification Committee to utilize the Town Bridge St Parking lot on October 7th, 2023 for their annual plant swap.

4.2 Lead Pipe Inventory

Permission for Delaware Engineering to move forward with the lead pipe inventory grant application.

RESOLUTION # 95 -2023

LEAD PIPE INVENTORY

On the motion of Supervisor Johnson, seconded by Councilman McDonough the following resolution was,

ADOPTED 4 AYES 0 NAYS 1 ABSENT

RESOLVED the Town Board authorizes Delaware Engineering to move forward with the lead pipe inventory grant application

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

The following from the public made comments

- Iris Helfeld - Is it possible for more people from the community to join the group working on the pavilion? Can they sit in?
- Bernie Lohmann – Why don't you put up a pole barn? Use crushed stone instead of cement?
- Idk - Questions regarding the grant and when it was applied for and if there are possibilities for grants in the future. Appreciates the youth commission and everything they do, need more time for discussion and feedback.
- Valerie Gregoretti – comment regarding park at Bethel and suggested using Kitchen and Gymnasium at the Union for activities and not the spot for a community center, Do we need a permanent structure if it isn't going to be utilized all of the time.
- Eugene Wolf – Had questions regarding the amount of the grant and limiting the size of the project to the amount of funds received
- Lisa D'Andreas – The Town of Bethel Park used as an example is totally run by the town of Bethel. Discussion regarding facilities and locations, Route 55 passed the airport. Workers are employed to clean and maintain the park. The board should also consider that the park should be enjoyed by the people the entire town not just those adjacent to the park.

6 CLOSING ITEMS

Board Comment

- Councilman Triggs – exciting to hear some new voices, we appreciate everyone coming in and voicing their comments and concerns, some new voices have been heard tonight
- Deputy Supervisor Luchsinger – we have heard what the public wants and hope to deliver something soon

Adjournment

With no further business to be had, the meeting recessed at 9:16 PM to August 23rd 2023 at 1:00pm on motion of Councilman Triggs, seconded by Councilman McDonough All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Crystal Weston, Town Clerk