

**Town of Canton
November 8, 2023
Regular Board Meeting
In Person and Video conference
Minutes**

Present:

Mary Ann Ashley	----	Supervisor
Randy Brown	----	Council Member
Bob Santamoor	----	Council Member
Jim Smith	----	Council Member
John Taillon	----	Council Member

Also Present: Town Clerk Heidi L. Smith, Assessor Cindy Brand, Code Officer Michael McQuade, Highway Superintendent Steven Smith, Economic Developer Leigh Rodriguez

Absent: Historian Linda Casserly, Recreation Director Meghan Richardson

Public Attendance: North Country This Week Paul Mitchell, Watertown Daily Times Tom Graser, Maragret Mauch

Zoom Attendance: Confidential Secretary/Bookkeeper Shelby Bacon, Angela and John Gray, CPA, John Casserly, Toby Irven, Solar Attorney Bill Buchan

A. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome

Supervisor Ashley called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Ashley added under new business #3. Installation of a catch basin on the Miner Street Project-Amount \$7,250.

B. Public Comment

None

C. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Council Member Randy Brown to approve the October 10, 2023, Regular Meeting, and the October 11, 2023, Zoning Public Hearing minutes.

All in favor. Motion carried.

D. Correspondence

#1. The Town received two notices of applications for the Office of Cannabis Management Licenses for Adult Use Retail Dispensaries.

#1. Applicant Name: Back to the Land Herbs, LLC – 309 Miner Street Rd.
– Robert J. Washo.

#2. Applicant Name: Sleepy Fox, LLC – location to be determined within
12 months – Austin Bailey.

#2. Supervisor Ashley attended the Planning Board meeting to give a brief notice to the planning board of the Town and Village hiring a firm to review and update the Comprehensive Plan.

E. Town Finances Reports

Angela Gray, CPA gave the Town Finances report and stated that everything is happening according to the budget plan.

Angela Gray gave the Town Clerk's Financial Report for the month of October. A copy of the report was given to Clerk Smith and the board prior to the meeting for review.

Supervisor Ashley stated that the fourth quarter sales tax was received in the amount of \$299,174.84. The Highway sales budget item of \$152,196.10 has been satisfied. The overage of \$146,978.74 has been put in the "B" account.

F. Audit Committee

"A" General	----	\$142,688.35
"B" Town Outside	----	\$3,958.40
"DA" Townwide Highway	----	\$8,785.37
"DB" Town Highway	----	\$16,805.23
"SF" Special Fire	----	\$4,588.83
"SL" Special Lighting	----	\$576.95
"T&A" Trust & Agency	----	\$21,932.16

A motion was made by Council Member Jim Smith and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to approve the November expenditures.
All in favor. Motion carried.

G. Acceptance of Department Reports

Town Clerk: Clerk Smith reported while working with General Code to get the Town Code up to date Mike will be the lead. Once that stage is complete, Smith will take over as lead for the town. Smith stated that she forgets to put this on her monthly reports that every month the Clerk's office is communicating with the dog warden. Smith added that she continues to be busy with FOIL requests. Smith also recognized Deputy Clerk Streit for all her hard work.

Communication and Technology Committee – Smith stated the committee has been busy working on a sitemap for the new website. The committee is going through the pages on the current website to figure out what pages are "floating around" and better understand the layout. There will be a town department head meeting on November 17th to go over the current website and see what they would like transferred to the new website.

Economic Development: Economic Developer Rodriguez reported that the Willow Island Project is moving along, permits are all in place. The majority of work on the Miner Street Project is done. The NY Main Street continues to move along. The second water source for the Village is also moving along. The contract is signed with Barton & Loguidice for the Sand Salt Facility. Rodriguez has asked for an extension on the Village CBDG Grant. Rodriguez applied for the NY Forward Grant of \$4,000.

Highway: Highway Superintendent Smith reported that they have finished up paving for the season. The plow trucks are ready to go. Smith asked the board to consider

raising the procurement policy for the highway department from \$5,000 to \$10,000. With the increase in materials, it is a struggle to order supplies without going over the procurement policy.

Council Member Santamoor suggested raising the procurement policy for highway to \$15,000.

Assessor: Assessor Brand reported that the Author Imagery by NYS will do a fly over of St. Lawrence County in the spring of 2024. The sales analysis showed that the Canton's residential trend has gone up 9% since last year. It is looking like another 5% drop in the equalization rate. Brand will know more closer to February. Brand will be mailing out exemption letters at the end of December.

Supervisor Ashley added that with the 2024 budget, it allows for a part time person in the Assessor's office. Ashley stated that she would like to put out an advertisement before the end of the year or at least start working on it.

Code Enforcement: Code Officer McQuade reported that eight new permits were issued. The month of November was busy helping with FOIL requests. A public hearing was held on the State Hwy 310 Solar projects East and West. McQuade also reported on the cannabis applications that were received. McQuade added that he took a two-hour webinar on cannabis and there was a lot of information to take in. When the town or village gets a notice there is a 30-day window to comment to the Office of Cannibals Management if you have any objections on the location or if you are in favor of it. McQuade also attended a NYSERDA webinar. McQuade stated that the Solar project on CR 27 is slowly moving along and the Judson Street Solar project will be starting up in the next few weeks.

Recreation: Recreation Director Richardson was unable to attend the meeting. Supervisor Ashley added to the recreation report that the full-time person that was just hired unexpectedly resigned over the weekend.

A motion was made by Council Member Randy Brown and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to accept department reports.
All in favor. Motion carried.

H. Committee Reports

Highway Committee – Jim Smith reported that the committee met briefly this morning to discuss the item that is on the agenda.

Sustainability Committee – Bob Santamoor reported that he was unable to attend the last meeting but reported that the committee is working on their action plan. Supervisor Ashley added that Cathy Shrady presented at the Planning Board meeting on Climate Change.

I. Old Business

1. Procurement Policy for Highway

A motion was made by Council Member Jim Smith and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to amend the current procurement policy under the section for Highway to raise the figure from \$5,000 to \$15,000 per procurement.

All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Non-Contract Policy

This item needs to be discussed in executive session.

3. Approve Inter-Fund Loan of \$150,000 from the B Fund to A Fund

John Gray, CPA reminded the board that an inter-fund loan needs to be paid back before the end of the year.

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley to approve an inter-fund loan of \$150,000 from the B fund to A fund.
All in favor. Motion carried.

See attached resolution.

Council Member Taillon commented his concern on how it will be paid back.

Council Member Smith stated that this will be an ongoing discussion until the board decides how to increase the fund balance in "A".

Supervisor Ashley added that eventually the board will need to override the tax cap to meet that threshold.

Further discussion was had on raising the tax cap in the future.

4. Authorize Journal Entry Removing Joint Account M from the Town of Canton financial accounting program of \$34,303

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Council Member Randy Brown to administer a journal entry to remove the joint account liability from the Town of Canton accounting program.
All in favor. Motion carried.

See attached resolution.

5. 64 Main Street

The board received an email from Mayor Dalton stating that after speaking with the low bidder they have offered to hold the original price for the demolition if the work can be done in the spring. The low bid by Judd Environmental was \$64,260. Depending on the weather they may be able to abatement work, no demolition until the weather improves in the spring.

Further discussion had on the 64 Main Street property and the needs for the municipal building.

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Council Member John Taillon to utilize the original bid, accepting that bid, and allowing them to move forward with the demolition for the \$64,260.

Ayes – 3

Bob Santamoor, John Taillon, Mary Ann Ashley

Nays – 2

Randy Brown, Jim Smith

Motion carried.

J. New Business

1. Town Clerk Request to increase amount of Cash Drawers

Clerk Smith requested an increase in the clerk's cash drawer from \$50 to \$200. The request is due to the office constantly being short on smaller bills and change to operate the office.

Supervisor Ashley stated there is a draft resolution that will be brought to the next meeting or at the organizational meeting.

2. Highway Request for Approval for Dump Box Bidding

Highway Superintendent Smith requested to go out to bid for a dump box.

A motion was made by Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to approve dump box bidding.
All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Installation of a Catch Basin on the Miner Street Project-Amount \$7,250

Highway Superintendent Smith stated there is a drainage issue at one of the homes on Miner Street. Smith stated it needs to have a catch basin installed to take surface water and water that is coming in from another pipe to be tied together to make a flat surface. Instead of having a deep gashing pocket off the edge of the road. There will be a storm drain cover on top that the surface water can get into it. The funds will come out of the fund balance.

A motion was made by Council Member Jim Smith and seconded by Council Member to approve the purchase of the \$7,250 catch basin for Miner Street Road project with the installation done by Sheehan.
All in favor. Motion carried.

K. Public Comment

None

Executive Session: Upon a majority vote upon a motion that identifies the subject to be considered, the Council may conduct an executive session to discuss any of the issues identified as proper by Public Officers Law 105(1)

A motion was made by Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to go into executive session for the purpose of [D] discussion regarding pending litigation and [F] matters pertaining to employment history of a particular person.
All in favor. Motion carried.

Highway Superintendent Steven Smith was invited into executive session.

Highway Superintendent Steven Smith left executive session at 8:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley to come out of executive session at 9:03 p.m.
All in favor. Motion carried.

Action taken out of executive session.

A motion was made by Council Member John Taillon and seconded by Council Member Bob Santamoor to set a Public Hearing on the Proposed Zoning Law for Wednesday, December 6th at 6:00 p.m.
All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Council Member Bob Santamoor and seconded by Council Member Randy Brown to adjourn the regular board meeting at 9:04 p.m.
All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Heidi L. Smith
Town Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 35
November 8, 2023

CONF

**TOWN BOARD AUTHORIZATION FOR TOWN SUPERVISOR AND GRAY & GRAY CPA TO DO AN
INTER-FUND LOAN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000 FROM THE B FUND TO THE A FUND**

WHEREAS, the Town of Canton A Fund is in need of additional funds due to the decrease in revenue expected for the A Fund for the past few years; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Canton has recognized this critical issue due to the substantial decrease specifically expected in court revenue; and

WHEREAS, it is surmised that this is due to the historically low tax rate over the years and the COVID pandemic; and

WHEREAS, this has created a financial situation for the Town of Canton in the Townwide A Fund for the remainder of the 2023 fiscal year; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Canton Town Board hereby authorizes the Town Supervisor and Gray & Gray CPA to do an inter-fund loan from the B Fund to the A fund in the amount of \$150,000.

11/8/2023
Date

Wendy B. Smith
Canton Town Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 312
November 8, 2023

COPY

TOWN BOARD AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER A JOURNAL
ENTRY TO REMOVE THE JOINT ACCOUNT LIABILITY
FROM THE TOWN OF CANTON ACCOUNTING PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Town of Canton has a "Due to Other Governments" liability in the accounting program for the Joint Activity Account in the amount of (\$34,300); and

WHEREAS, the Town of Canton created this account several years ago (2016) with no documentation as to what it exactly is or where the funds came from; and

WHEREAS, there are no liabilities, as far as the Town Supervisor and Gray & Gray CPA knows due to other governments and the Town of Canton closed the bank account in 2019; and

WHEREAS, there has never been enough cash in the Joint Activity Account to cover this liability which has created a negative fund balance for the Joint Activity; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Canton Town Board hereby approves the Town Supervisor and Gray & Gray CPA to administer a journal entry to remove the Joint Account Liability from the Town of Canton Accounting Records because it is obsolete.

11/8/2023
Date

Wendy H. Smith
Canton Town Clerk