

REGULAR MEETING, TOWN BOARD, TOWN OF LITTLE FALLS, MAY 13, 2025

A Regular meeting of the Town Board, Town of Little Falls was held on May 13, 2025 at the town hall commencing at 7:02 p.m. with the following members present:

Present: Supervisor Dan Casler
Councilman Anthony Viscomi
Councilman Kirk Schwasnick
Councilman Mitch Soules

Absent; Councilman Kevin Sullivan

Others Present: Town Clerk, Sandra Regan; Highway Superintendent, Donald Cotton; Town Attorney, Nicholas Macri; Court Clerk, Therese Soules, Codes Enforcer, Phil Green; Comprehensive Steering Committee members Steve Salamone, Kimberly Pepper, Bob Brown, Marianne Graziadei and Comprehensive Plan Project Manager, Jordyan Mueller; Peter Campione, County Legislator; Karen Casler, Planning Board Vice Chairwoman; Michael Edwards, Executive Director of Herkimer County Land Bank; Samantha Ackerman.

-Supervisor Casler called the meeting to order directing the Clerk to call the roll.

RESOLUTION #42
Minute Approval

On motion of Councilman Soules, seconded by Councilman Viscomi, the following resolution was ADOPTED-vote:

Ayes: Supervisor Casler; Councilmen Viscomi, Schwasnick, Soules
Noes-0

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous month's meetings, as submitted by the clerk, hereby be approved.

-Herkimer County Land Bank Executive Director, Michael Edwards, stated that the county has formed its own Land Bank to clean up blighted properties in our communities and that town has four zombies properties that the Land Bank will be looking at.

Mr. Edwards gave a brief overview of the program and informed the board that he is available at anytime.

-Steering Committee Member Salamone stated that the survey is complete, that there were a good number of people who responded to it and that the analysis format that was used breaks down what the residents are looking for; that they'll give the town board some time to review the survey analysis report and give their thoughts on it and then they'll go from there in the direction they feel is needed to get the comprehensive plan on the shelf.

Supervisor Casler stated that he'd like to see the progress continued and the next steps taken to move forward.

-Comprehensive Plan Project Manager, Jordyan Mueller, handed out a Community Survey Analysis Summary and highlighted some key findings of the survey.

Mr. Salamone stated that the committee wants to publish the summary on their website so residents can see what the results were.

Ms. Mueller stated that as far as the next step, she thinks they are well positioned to pursue a very competitive smart growth comprehensive planning grant; that there are some key

strategy formulations, ideas and discussions happening with the steering committee around how to get this off the ground rather than waiting years to see something happen.

Ms. Mueller stated they recognize the fiscal constraints that the town board has, and in the interest of being fiscally conservative they are pursuing and exploring options for grant funding that does not require the town to contribute additional monies beyond what's already been contribute, her contractual \$5,000 and whatever the steering committee has been paid.

Supervisor Casler stated that he and Ms. Mueller met with Herkimer IDA Executive Director, John Piseck, and that almost immediate funding could be obtained if the town signs on as a pro-housing community.

Ms. Mueller stated that if the town's awarded a smart growth community planning grant, the IDA has committed to act as the town's administrative partner for managing that grant, will support the matching funds requirements, and will submit an endorsement letter in support of getting the gap funding to write the grant and continue community engagement.

Ms. Mueller stated that Mr. Piseck recommended that for the gap funding, the town pursue the community foundation as an immediate source for the gap funding; that there's also an opportunity through NEXT to be a fiscal sponsor, meaning that money from the community foundation could be funneled through Herkimer NEXT to subcontract Ms. Mueller, eliminating some of the administrative stuff from the town.

Ms. Mueller stated that in regarded to pro-housing that Mr. Piseck recommended, it is advantageous to go pro-housing in that there's 750 million dollars set aside for designated communities; that she has it in writing that becoming pro-housing doesn't take away home rule, what it does is open you up to a tremendous amount of funding for infrastructure, feasibility planning, studies, and tons of opportunities and she encourages the board to think about this.

Ms. Mueller stated that if this is viable, the money is available, the partnership is locked in, and a resolution would likely be needed to continue to work on the plan in partnership with NEXT in receiving monies from the Community Foundation.

Attorney Macri stated that he recommends that the town board be well educated on a pro-housing commitment before taking any action on such.

Ms. Mueller stated that at the next meeting it is the hope of the steering committee to return, confirm that there will be funding through the Community Foundation and NEXT, and outline the grant proposal strategy.

Supervisor Casler asked the board if they wanted to proceed. Councilman Soules stated he thinks this should be discussed at a later date and motioned for such.

RESOLUTION #43

Table Discussion on Comprehensive Planning

On motion of Councilman Soules, seconded by Councilman Schwasnick, the following resolution was ADOPTED by majority of roll call vote:

Supervisor Casler	No
Councilman Viscomi	Aye
Councilman Schwasnick	Aye
Councilman Soules	Aye

RESOLVED that the Town Board hereby tables discussion on comprehensive planning until a later date.

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-Supervisor Casler stated he didn't understand why discussion had to be tabled. Councilman Soules stated he motioned to table discussion to allow the board time to review the survey analysis summary and to consider the information discussed tonight.

After discussion on this matter, the board decided that further discussion would be held on proceeding at next month's meeting.

-Supervisor Report:

Supervisor Casler reported:

-That he submitted a financial report for the board's review.

-That he would like to pay off the Caterpillar Loader early to save \$815.00 in interest.

After discussion, this was approved.

-That he proposes charging fees for foil requests for financial information that take an hour to compile. Discussion was held on this matter and this was approved.

RESOLUTION #44

Supervisor Authorization to Pay Off the 2022 Caterpillar Wheel Loader

On motion of Supervisor Casler, seconded by Councilman Soules, the following resolution was ADOPTED by roll call vote:

Supervisor Casler Aye

Councilman Viscomi Aye

Councilman Schwasnick Aye

Councilman Soules Aye

RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor hereby be authorized to pay off the 2022 Caterpillar 938M Wheel Loader at a cost of \$39,645.00.

RESOLUTION #45

Authorization to Charge Fee For Foil Requests

On motion of Councilman Viscomi, seconded by Councilman Schwasnick, the following resolution was ADOPTED by roll call vote:

Supervisor Casler Aye

Councilman Viscomi Aye

Councilman Schwasnick Aye

Councilman Soules Aye

RESOLVED that the town board hereby approves that foiled financial requests be charged \$55.00 per hour and \$.25 per page.

-Assessor Report: None

-Code Enforcer Report:

Codes Enforcer Green reported that building permits are being issued and inspections are on-going.

-Town Attorney Report: Nothing at this time.

-Town Justice Report:

Supervisor Casler reported that the monthly report and deposit has been received.

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-Health Officer Report: None

-Dog Control Officer Report: None

-Planning Board Report:

Clerk Regan reported that the planning board didn't meet, therefore there's nothing to report.

-Highway Superintendent Report: Nothing at this time.

-Town Clerk Report:

Clerk Regan reported that Local Law #1 and #2 were filed with the state and that she is working on the fee schedule.

RESOLUTION #46

Supervisor Monthly Financial Report Approval

On motion of Councilman Viscomi, seconded by Councilman Schwasnick, the following resolution was ADOPTED-vote:

Ayes-Supervisor Casler; Councilmen Viscomi, Schwasnick

Noes-Councilman Soules

RESOLVED that the Supervisor's Monthly Financial Report, as submitted, hereby be approved and placed on file.

-Councilman Soules stated he voted no on the Supervisor's Monthly Financial Report because it's incomplete.

-Discussion was held on approving the water feasibility study resolution with board approving such.

RESOLUTION #47

Authorizing Town Participation in a City of Little Falls Grant-Funded Feasibility Study for Regional Shared Water Infrastructure

On motion of Councilman Viscomi, seconded by Councilman Schwasnick, the following resolution was ADOPTED by roll call vote:

Supervisor Casler Aye

Councilman Viscomi Aye

Councilman Schwasnick Aye

Councilman Soules Aye

WHEREAS, the City of Little Falls recognizes the importance of ensuring a sustainable, efficient, and cost-effective water supply for its residents and neighboring communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Little Falls, in collaboration with the Town of Little Falls, Village of Dolgeville, Village of Herkimer, Town of Herkimer, and other neighboring communities, has been presented with an opportunity to participate in a feasibility study supported by the NYS Department of State (DOS) Local Government Efficiency (LGE) Grant Program, which provides

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(Resolution #47-Cont.)

\$100,000 in funding toward a regional water distribution initiative aimed at improving water quality, reducing municipal costs, and modernizing local service delivery; and

WHEREAS, the LGE Grant Program requires a 50% local match, which the City of Little Falls will meet with a commitment of \$50,000 from the City's Water Fund; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the feasibility study is to evaluate the technical, financial, and logistical viability of developing shared water infrastructure among the participating municipalities, with the goals of improving water quality, reducing operational costs, and enhancing regional resilience; and

WHEREAS, participation in this study does not commit the City of Little Falls or its participants in the feasibility study to any future action or expenditure beyond the terms of the grant, but rather provides valuable data to inform future decision-making; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Little Falls finds that participation in this feasibility study is in the best interest of the City and its residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Little Falls, New York, as follows:

The Town of Little Falls hereby authorizes participation in the grant-funded feasibility study for shared water resources in collaboration with the City of Little Falls, Village of Dolgeville, Village of Herkimer, Town of Herkimer, and other neighboring communities identified as relevant through the scope of the study.

The Mayor of the City of Little Falls, or her designee, is authorized to execute any necessary agreements, applications, or documents required to secure the NYS DOS Local Government Efficiency (LGE) Grant and to facilitate the Town's participation in the feasibility study.

The City of Little Falls commits to providing a local match of \$50,000, to be allocated from the City's Water Fund, as required by the terms of the grant.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

-Meeting recessed to audit the bills at 8:17 p.m.

-Meeting resumed at 8:30 p.m.

RESOLUTION #48

Payment of General Bills

On motion of Councilman Soules, seconded by Councilman Schwasnick the following resolution was ADOPTED-vote:

Ayes- Supervisor Casler; Councilmen Viscomi Schwasnick, Soules

Noes-0

RESOLVED that the General Bills #54-62 in the amount of \$33,579.22 hereby be paid.

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RESOLUTION #49

Payment of Highway Bills

On motion of Councilman Viscomi, seconded by Councilman Soules, the following resolution was ADOPTED-vote:

Ayes-Supervisor Casler; Councilmen Viscomi, Schwasnick, Soules

Noes-0

RESOLVED that the Highway Bills #68-87, in the amount of \$24,966.26 hereby be paid.

-The next regular meeting will be held on June 10, 2025 at the town hall at 7:00 p.m.

-Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.-Councilmen Soules, Viscomi

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Regan, Town Clerk