

TOWN OF CLARKSON
TOWN BOARD MEETING
April 9, 2019

The Town Board of the Town of Clarkson held their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at the Clarkson Town Hall, 3710 Lake Road, Clarkson, NY at 6:00 PM.

PRESENT:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Christa Filipowicz | Supervisor |
| Allan Hoy | Councilperson |
| Patrick Didas | Councilperson |
| Jackie Smith | Councilperson |
| Leslie Zink | Councilperson |
| Sharon Mattison | Town Clerk |
| Robert Viscardi | Highway Supt. |
| Richard Olson | Attorney for the Town |

ALSO:

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Elizabeth Spencer | Assessor |
| **excused | |

Supervisor Filipowicz opened the meeting. Sharon Mattison, Town Clerk led all those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed for those serving in the military and our First Responders.

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Clarkson Highway employee Kyle Donahue was presented with a Certificate of Recognition. While working one evening, he noted excessive smoke coming from a home on Ridge Road, called 911 to report the house fire, and assisted the residents to safety. The Board thanked Kyle.

HISTORIAN

Leanna Hale presented historical background details surrounding the creation of Clarkson (*see attached*).

BUILDING INSPECTOR

Supervisor Filipowicz introduced our new Building Inspector, Kevin Moore.

OPEN FORUM

Supervisor Filipowicz reminded residents that when it is their turn to speak, to please stand, state their name and their address. She introduced Town Assessor, Liz Spencer, who commented that residents should have received their reassessment letters by now. She went on to explain the reassessment process. The reassessment was necessary because the Town's equalization rate had dropped into the 80s. If sales in the town are higher than the assessed values, the equalization rate drops. To get to a fair and equitable assessment roll, all properties need to be at 100% so that everyone is paying their fair share. Sales in Clarkson are some of the highest in Monroe County. Her job was to put residents' properties at values that they would be able to sell them for. Liz invited residents to make an appointment to see her to review their assessment. They should bring in photos, market analysis or an appraisal of their property. One of the biggest factors in Clarkson is the land. Land sales have been extremely high; but people are paying those prices. Informal hearings will be held for the next month. If you are not happy with the decision, residents have the option of a formal hearing with the Board of Assessment Review on May 28th, here at the Town Hall. They should contact her for grievance paperwork. Residents must prove to the Board of Assessment Review that the new assessment value is wrong. If they are still not in agreement with the decision, the next step is Small Claims Court for residential properties; Commercial property owners would file an Article 7.

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Councilperson Didas asked L. Spencer to clarify the consequences of not having an equalization rate of 100%. If towns do not maintain an equalization rate of 100%, the State has the authority to step in and perform the reassessment. For example, new homes are assessed at 100% right away, but residents in older homes who have not been reassessed in many years are not paying their fair share. It is very important that all properties are assessed at 100%. Councilperson Hoy asked L. Spencer to explain how the new assessments might affect the tax burden. L. Spencer reminded those present that she has no input or control regarding tax rates, albeit county or school, but that the equalization rate can play an important role in determining tax rates.

Douglas Baker, 240 Gina Way, commented that he has heard that we live in one of the highest taxed areas in the state and the country, based on rate. Supervisor Filipowicz stated that as far as tax rates, you can't compare Clarkson to a town like Henrietta as they have more commercial development. L. Spencer said that residents can go to nytax.gov and look up information on tax rates and equalization rates in counties throughout New York State. Mr. Baker asked if the market drops, will the Town drop assessments. Liz responded that if the market should have a significant drop, she would recommend to the Town Board that the assessments be reviewed.

Sheldon Meyers, 323 Darla Drive, asked why the Town Board waited ten years to have a reassessment done. Supervisor Filipowicz responded that as a result of the reassessment done ten years ago, that assessor resigned because of the harsh treatment from residents. Then we went through two employees that were hired as assessors, they finished their assessor training, and then left. We are a small municipality and the problem with retaining an assessor seems to be linked to the higher wages that a larger municipality can offer. Mr. Meyers said that increased assessments mean increased revenues and he would hope that the Town Board will be actively lobbying the county and the school to lower our tax rates.

Kirk Golden, 47 Tearose Meadow Lane, commented that when reassessments are done, it will change what we pay the school board. L. Spencer said it depends on what the school sets as the tax rate; the same with the county.

H. Mundy who served as the Treasurer for the Brockport Fire District, gave his explanation regarding the process for tax levies, tax caps and tax rates. He commented that when a school budget is presented, it goes before a referendum of people in the school district for approval or disapproval by residents.

Larry Foote, 120 Cassidy Way, stated that his 2018 tax bill shows an assessed value as of July 2016 at 95%. L. Spencer asked him to bring his tax bill in and she would help him understand the process.

L. Spencer commented that she just received market trends from the state for Clarkson covering the last ten years. The first five years showed no growth, but the trend for the last five years demonstrated a growth of 13%. She stated that Clarkson had numerous properties that were not accurately assessed. Mr. Mundy asked what the increase in total assessed value for Clarkson was; Liz will be able to share this value with the Town Board and residents once she receives confirmation from the state.

Tom Trapp, 36 Sugar Tree Circle, feels strongly that he would not be able to sell his home for the new assessed value. He wonders what would happen if in the future homes in Clarkson start selling for less than the new assessed value.

Supervisor Filipowicz thanked Liz for all her hard work. She encouraged residents to make an appointment with Liz to discuss their new assessments.

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RESOLUTION #119
APPOINT KEITH O'TOOLE, DEPUTY ATTORNEY

Introduced by Councilperson Hoy

Seconded by Councilperson Didas

To appoint Keith O'Toole, Deputy Attorney for the Town of Clarkson at a rate of \$160/hour.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, Smith and Zink

NAYS: None

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

Supervisor Filipowicz reported that the 2019 United Way campaign is underway and thanked employees for their pledges. She received an email from County Clerk Adam Bello indicating that because of a misallocation in mortgage tax payments between January 2016 and September 2018, Clarkson will be receiving approximately \$9,500. She stated that the spring newsletter was distributed last week and hopes that residents find the information useful.

TOWN BOARD REPORTS

Councilperson Smith reminded those present of the ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park, May 23rd at 7 p.m., the food drive starting April 22nd with donations being collected at the Town Hall, the Seymour Library's recent successful book sale, and the Rec Center recently sponsored a URMC Wellness Clinic.

Councilperson Zink commented that activity has been increasing for the Planning Board. She mentioned that the support boards are requesting an overhead projector to help facilitate viewing maps, etc. that applicants submit. She will gather information on projector systems and report back to the Town Board.

Councilperson Didas remarked that we have a total of 14 sponsored trees for Kimball Park. The Highway Department will be working with Sara's Farm Market on the planting process. He will be ordering the placards soon.

HIGHWAY SUPERINDENDENT REPORTS

R. Viscardi had nothing new to report.

RESOLUTION #120
MINUTES

Introduced by Councilperson Didas

Seconded by Councilperson Hoy

To approve March 26, 2019 minutes.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, and Zink

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Councilperson Smith

RESOLUTION #121
AUDIT—4-01-2019

Introduced by Councilperson Hoy

Seconded by Councilperson Didas

To authorize payment of audit 4-01-2019 to include the following:

Total \$43,885.53 Gen. \$27,241.57; Hwy. \$11,154.87; SL \$3,608.11; TA \$1,880.98

For distribution checks from 34308 – 34344; 6003 - 6004

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, Smith and Zink

NAYS: None

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RESOLUTION #122
EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Councilperson Zink

Seconded by Councilperson Smith

To enter executive session at 6:40 P.M. to discuss a personnel matter.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, Smith and Zink

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION #123
RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Motion by Councilperson Didas

Seconded by Councilperson Smith

To return to regular session at 7:44 P.M.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, Smith and Zink

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION #124
ADJOURNMENT

Introduced by Councilperson Smith

Seconded by Councilperson Zink

To adjourn the Town Board meeting at 7:45 P.M.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Hoy, Didas, Smith and Zink

NAYS: None

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon S. Mattison

Town Clerk

Approved 04-23-2019

**Presentation to the Clarkson Town Board
Tuesday, April 9, 2019
Clarkson Historian, Leanna Hale**

What is now Ridge Road was the southern boundary of the glacial Lake Iroquois which when receded became Lake Ontario. The Seneca Indians used the “ridge” to travel to their hunting grounds. The area north of the ridge became known as the “black north” because of the thick vegetation. The Seneca Indians never lived in this area. Their homes were west by Buffalo Creek and east - named Ganondagan (near Victor). The ridge has always formed a natural roadbed from what is now Lewiston to Oswego.

Phelps and Gorham purchased the land west of the Genesee River from the Seneca Tribe for the purpose of building a grist mill. The property was then owned by Robert Morse, a “founding father” of the United States and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. In 1793 the area then known as the Triangle Tract was purchased by Messrs. LeRoy, Bayard and Evarts of New York City.

General Matthew Clarkson became an associate of the trio and obtained land; 100 acres of which he gave to help form the town later named for him. The location of the acreage is unknown. Clarkson was the Great Great Grandson of another Matthew Clarkson who first came to New York in 1690 as Secretary of the Province for the British. General Clarkson served in the Revolution under Benedict Arnold and was present at the Battle of Saratoga. He was also present at the surrender of Savannah and the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. He later served as Assistant Secretary of War, State Assemblyman, Regent of the University of New York, U.S. Marshall, State Senator, and President of the New York City Hospital and the Bank of New York.

What would become the Town of Clarkson, by Act of the New York Legislature in 1819, was originally part of the Murray Township. The “pie shaped” Triangle Tract extended from LeRoy at its point, to Lake Ontario at its widest point. After a survey of the Tract, land was put up for sale at \$2.50 per acre. Moody Freeman was the first buyer of a tract of 100 acres on what is now Lake Road, north of the Ridge for \$198. The Ridge at that point was still a trail and was approximately 15 inches wide. Freeman was the first to build a house, clear land and harvest grain. He was educated and would later serve as Justice of the Peace and an early “backwoods” lawyer. He was known as God fearing and instrumental in forming the first Christian church in Clarkson.

The next two land purchases were in 1804. James Sayer purchased land on the north side of Ridge and Elijah Blodgett purchased land which is between Ridge Road and East Avenue, on the east side of Lake Road. The brick house, painted white, which was built by his son John, is still standing. The remnants of the mill he built in partnership with Heil Brockway (founder of Brockport) can still be found on what is now the Duryea property.

In another part of Clarkson (in the area of Lawton Road, Ireland Road, Sweden Walker Road), there was an Irish settlement which would be later known as Otis. Among those settlers was the Huoy family.

It may be somewhat unusual, but we have three people in this room who are descended from the early settlers:

- Alan Hoy from the Huoy family, which settled in the Otis area in 1808;
- Sharon Mattison, whose husband’s family members, Epaphras and David Mattison, are listed on the 1817 store list of the Seymour Store; and
- Leanna Blodgett Hale who is descended from Elijah Blodgett, land purchaser and 1804 and mill owner.

If anyone else is descended from any of the early 1800 inhabitants of Clarkson, please see me after the meeting.

Note: The Seymour Store was on the corner where the Town Hall now resides and was built by the Seymour brothers who with Heil Brockway (who had a hotel where Crosby’s is located now) went on to be founders of Brockport.