

**MINUTES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL & REGULAR MONTLY MEETING
OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CANAJOHARIE
HELD JUNE 8, 2023 AT THE TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM**

Present: Benny Goldstein, Town Supervisor
William Armitstead, Councilman
Rodney Young, Councilman
Michael Muhlebeck, Councilman
John Peruzzi, Councilman

Recording Secretary: Erica Hayes, Town Clerk

Others Present: Steve Oare, Town Highway Superintendent
Les Hassan, Town Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Cole, Planning Board Chair
Kirsten Dunn, Town Attorney
Kylie Ferguson, Legal Assistant
Scott McDonald, Avangrid Renewals
Matt Moses, Avangrid Renewals
Mary Catherine Caron, Town Resident
Steve Stortecky, Town Resident
Chad Bowerman, Town Resident

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Goldstein, at 7:30 PM, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Accept the May 2023 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Goldstein, seconded by Mr. Armitstead, that the minutes of the May 2023 meeting, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be approved. All in favor, ayes carried.

Recognition of Citizens Present

The Board recognized Mary Caron, Steve Stortecky and Chad Bowerman, neighbors and town residents that presented their concerns regarding solar farms.

Mrs. Caron made a very touching speech about esthetics and how solar farms will mar the Town's look.

Following that, Mr. Stortecky made mention of our draft solar law, which he has been keeping up with, and said he's very motivated to see what the final law looks like to ensure that the Town Residents are protected.

Next to speak was Mr. Bowerman, who presented a very compelling case in regard to his apprehension toward solar panels. With the potential of his property being surround 360 degrees by solar, Mr. Bowerman stated that from his research he's found that the panels are toxic, covered in Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA), have an electromagnetic field and project a sound that would be nearly deafening if he were to, in fact, become surrounded by panels.

During Public Comment there was a heated discussion between Mr. Goldstein and the residents that were present.

The Board also recognized Scott McDonald and Matt Moses of Avangrid Renewals, and their presentation of the revised PILOT Program. At this time the revision will be passed to our Article 10 representation, Terresa Bakner, for review.

Kirsten Dunn and Kylie Ferguson were also recognized by the Board. They were in attendance to speak about the draft solar law they have been working on, they made some suggestions on how to strengthen the esthetics aspect of the law, include some restricted areas where solar absolutely cannot cross over (i.e.: Snowmobile Trails), and anticipate

adding to the Fire Department requirements, as there will need to be extensive training, and re-training, on how to manage solar panels in the event of a fire.

The Board officially adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION #7 of 2023

Resolution to Introduce Local Law: Canajoharie Solar Energy Law

Sponsor: John Peruzzi, Sr., Councilman

Second: William Armitstead, Councilman

Whereas, the Town of Canajoharie has been deliberating over new solar provisions to be incorporated into the existing Zoning Code, entitled the Town of Canajoharie Solar Energy Law; and,

Whereas, the Town has held public information and work sessions exploring Town concerns about the proper placement of solar facilities and the accompanying energy storage system and the potential tax consequences thereof; and,

Whereas, the Town Board, after deliberation with the Town of Canajoharie Planning Board and by and through the advice of Delaware Engineering, Adam Yagelski, Senior Planner, and Attorneys for the Town, Dunn & Dunn, PLLC, it was determined that the Town was in need of a new law regulating placement and development of Solar Energy Systems; and,

Whereas, it is the Town’s responsibility to its residents to preserve property values and protect the quality of life; preserve the essential character of the Town as Historic and Agricultural; promote a clean, wholesome and attractive environment; protect clean water sources and prime farm lands; secure the public peace, health, safety, welfare and protection of the environment; and, the Town of Canajoharie finds that the above-mentioned law is necessary to further those Town goals; and,

Whereas, the Town Board of the Town of Canajoharie has declared it’s intent to name itself Lead Agency for a SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) Coordinated Review; and,

Whereas, the Town of Canajoharie recognized its responsibility under the General Municipal Law Section 239-m to refer the law to the County of Montgomery; and,

Whereas, the Town of Canajoharie Board intends to receive input from residents of the Town of Canajoharie at a Public Hearing; give Notice of the new proposed Law to neighboring municipalities and the County of Montgomery; and, conduct appropriate environmental reviews and/or public workshops.

Now, therefore, be it RESOLVED that: by the Board of the Town of Canajoharie that as of the date of this Resolution, said Proposed Local Law attached hereto shall be considered introduced to the Town; that the Town declares itself (of has done so previously) lead agency for the purposes of SEQR review; that the Town calls for a public hearing on the proposed laws to be held prior to the next scheduled monthly board meeting; and, that the Town shall notify neighboring municipalities and refer the law to the County of Montgomery.

VOTING	AYES	NAYS	ABSENT
Benny Goldstein, Councilman	X		
Michael Muhlebeck, Councilman	X		

William Armitstead, Councilman	X
John Peruzzi, Sr., Councilman	X
Rodney Young, Councilman	X

Town Highway Superintendent

Mr. Oare brought a resident’s concern to the Board, in regard to a speed reduction on Route 163. A motion was made by Mr. Muhlebeck, seconded by Mr. Armitstead to have NYS DOT perform a speed review in the area of concern. All in favor, ayes carried.

It was also reported by Mr. Oare that there were roughly 25 bidders present at the Pre-Bid meeting on June 1st for the Town Garage.

Town Clerk

On a motion made by Mr. Muhlebeck, seconded by Mr. Peruzzi, the decision to host a Public Hearing, scheduled an hour before our regularly scheduled Board meeting on July 13th, in regard to the Solar Law was approved. All in favor, ayes carried. More details to follow in the legals portion of the Amsterdam Recorder. The Board has also agreed to hold Public Comment open until our following Board meeting on August 10th.

Executive Session

Began at 8:32 PM. The following individuals were present: Mr. Goldstein, Mr. Muhlebeck, Mr. Armitstead, Mr. Young, Mr. Peruzzi, Mrs. Hayes, Mrs. Dunn and Ms. Ferguson. General discussion ended at 9:05 PM

Sole Assessor

There are two spots open on the Town of Canajoharie’s B.A.R. A listing will be put on the Town website to try to fill those spots for next year’s review.

Town Bookkeeper

TOWN OF CANAJOHARIE-6/8/23
CASH REPORT May 31, 2023

CHECKING ACCOUNTS		MONEY MARKET ACCOUNTS	
General	\$ 37,088.37	General	\$305,467.92
Fire District	\$ 39.86	Highway Town Wide	\$315,976.12
Highway Town Wide	\$ 91,150.15	Highway Part Town	<u>\$343,574.45</u>
Highway Part Town	\$ 268,426.52	Total	\$965,018.49
Trust & Agency	<u>\$ 41,514.03*</u>		
Total	\$ 438,218.93		

*\$31,859.96 Avangrid/Mohawk Solar Project Escrow

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Highway Cap Reserve	\$ 46,815.47
Gen-Cap Reserve-Garage	\$236,544.94
Gen-Cap Reserve-land	<u>\$ 14,623.18</u>
Total	\$297,683.59

Sincerely,
Amy S. Kretser, Bookkeeper

Authorization of Vouchers

The Town Clerk presented the following bill vouchers for approval:

General fund vouchers #173 through #206, totaling \$10,381.33.

Highway fund vouchers #57 through #65, totaling \$15,601.48.

On a motion by Mr. Armitstead, seconded by Mr. Muhlebeck, the bill vouchers were unanimously approved for payment. All in favor, ayes carried.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Muhlebeck, seconded by Mr. Armitstead, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM. All in favor, ayes carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Hayes
Town Clerk