

**TOWN OF ROSENDALE
TOWN BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 8, 2023**

Supervisor Walsh called the meeting to order at 7:00PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Supervisor Jeanne L. Walsh
 Councilman Joseph Havranek
 Councilmember Molly Muller
 Councilmember Ashley Sweeney

EXCUSED: Councilmember Carrie Wykoff

Also Attending: Ken Hassett – Deputy Town Supervisor, Jeremy Baracca – Assessor, Joe LaFera - Building Manager.

Deputy Town Clerk opened the Public Hearing at 7:02PM amendment tax exemptions for Firefighters and Ambulance Workers.

Marty Einneman - A Town of Rosendale resident asked if the exemption law is also with the county and does it apply to Water District, Library and other etc.? Supervisor Walsh stated the County will have their own law and the districts that have their own boards as well will have their own law. The Assessor stated the system isn't set up as of yet about the specifications of districts, but we are following up on confirming the information.

Assessor’s Overview of Tax Exemption Information for Firefighters and Ambulance Workers:

Jeremy stated to his understanding right now the Ulster County Assessment has passed it for the 2024 assessment role. They have questions posed with the Ulster County Assessor’s Office, who is providing the criteria information to the town and how they are going to implement it. At this moment the County is asking the Towns to slow down and not pass it for this year, so that it can be in place for 2024. Supervisor Walsh mentioned one of the things we are talking about is if the county isn't doing it for 2023 then it's probably not going to be enough of a benefit for those property owners that are already getting a tax exemption from their income tax to pass for 2023. Jeremy stated as an example: a resident called to review if the School District and the County doesn't pass it for 2023 their savings with the exemption would only be \$120.00, but the resident had a savings of \$200.00 already and the town wants to make sure they aren't losing other exemptions if other districts or the County hasn't passed it for 2023. Supervisor Walsh said the town doesn't want anyone to lose their exemption from the IRS and Jeremy stated this is why the town is waiting for the confirmation of information on how this will be implemented. So, residents do not utilize the exemption and lose other exemptions.

Brad Fiore – Chief of Cottekill Fire District – The Ulster County Coordinator forwarded a sample resolution to all the Fire District Chiefs for them to pass with the understanding that the School District needs to do their own, which will be a process. Supervisor Walsh mentioned making sure everyone is on the same page with information in reference to eligibility for Fire District Members and as of right now we do not have enough information before the March deadline for 2023. Jeremy states there are posed questions with the county for correct information for eligibility of if the person is active, enrolled membership of the fire districts etc.

Shawn Marks – High Falls Fire District - asked Jeremy, Does the Assessor’s Office have any sense of if this does get passed for locality of a Fire District adopting this, is the property owner mandated to take advantage of the exemption over the \$200.00 tax credit? Jeremy said no its their choice should you have two people who own the property one ambulance one fire, one can claim the credit and the other can claim the exemption and/or both can claim the credit both can claim the exemption it's their choice. Supervisor Walsh stated until all the information is confirmed it is better to crunch the numbers before putting on your taxes. The goal is for this to be a benefit. Especially since the March first deadline may not be annual as others are renewed each year. Sean asked if it will be the Assessors office that sets what the Fire Districts criteria is going to be? Jeremy stated as it stands now the County will be working with the Fire Districts. Supervisor Walsh mentioned her question to the County is if the Town Board is supposed to have an agreement with the

Fire Districts or Library for the criteria or does it get modified later, but we have not received the information yet to move forward.

Nick Rider -Chief of Rosendale Fire -every District has members that are Military Veterans. He asked will this affect their exemption or will this be in addition. Jeremy responded this is in addition to their Veteran exemption. Nick mentioned on the second page it talks about life members. The previous section speaks about having to be a member for active membership if you serve the Town of Rosendale, but it doesn't specify as far as life membership if somebody moves into the area that's a life member from outside the town being accepting as a life member, active member, or under what criteria. Supervisor Walsh stated that this is a question posed to be confirmed. Those concerns are part of the questions posed to the County as well as what does life member mean as in fighting fires for so many years and then office position for so many year. These are the types of questions that are being worked on to be confirmed. First, we need to find out what the State is going to accept. Nick mentioned some Fire Districts have their own criteria to be determined a life member. Supervisor Walsh agreed there needs to be more clarity on this section.

Art Lapp – Chief of High Falls Fire – They have a couple members that are 16 and 17 that are active, he asked, would their parents be eligible to get the exemption? Supervisor Walsh stated no they would need to be property owners, which also unfortunately doesn't help those that are renting either.

Another resident asked if the 20-year certification that is needed for life membership being grandfathered in or is it from the time this is passed. Ken Hassett – Deputy Supervisor read the verbiage stating it is up the individual organization that is certifying the member to state if they are 20 years certified for the exemption. Supervisor Walsh stated her concerns that each organization and the town be on the same page for the criteria of information to be qualified for the exemption.

Councilman Havranek mentioned sections that need to be defined such as resident versus property owner and the lifetime exemption 63.29 stating active service versus active member as defined to be active and eligible. Supervisor Walsh and Jeremy agree this needs to be more defined since the verbiage also utilizes enrolled member. Defining what is active versus enrolled and 20-year active fire service or office administrative roll.

Sean Marks – High Falls Fire District – There are five different fire companies with different bi-laws, active criteria may not be the same from each department and sounds like more information gathering for this needs to be completed. Supervisor Walsh agrees the fire companies will need to review their bi-laws and criteria for active members and bring a proposal that the Assessor can review with the town then we can all come together and try to have all on the same page with information and criteria.

Ken Hassett wanted to thank our Fire Fighters for their services.

A Cottekill Fire Department member asked if a person owns property here and move out of state and then return to make it our primary resident can we re-enroll. Supervisor Walsh stated if it is your primary residence, yes.

A Cottekill Fire Department member asked that percentage that goes to the property owners where does that come from. Supervisor Walsh replied from the other taxpayers in the community. Member – So, the \$200.00 tax credit that comes from the state does that offset? Supervisor Walsh said no the \$200.00 is your income tax we have nothing to do with.

Supervisor Walsh stated the town can pass the resolution for 2024, but the Town Assessor's Office is communicating to get a better understanding of all concerns brought forward by the Assessor's Office and residents. Councilman Havranek mentioned that there are districts we do not cover such as the Library, School and Fire and any questions of those district will need to be posed to them as well.

Supervisor Walsh asked Jeremy, Town Assessor, to give an overview of the Local Law #2 – Senior Citizens 65 or older Tax Exemption and Local Law #3 to increase income limitations for exemptions for Disabled Persons with Limited Income.

Colleen Tyler-Phillips – Bloomington Fire District – Asked if someone finds they are close to the limit would they qualify. Jeremy stated they would need to bring in the past two years of taxes, 1099s and the Assessor's Office will be happy to review it and see if they qualify for the exemption. Worst case scenario the application gets submitted and it may be denied for this year but approved for the following year. Supervisor Walsh stated these laws will be approved before the March 1st deadline so it will be affective for 2023.

Councilman Havranek asked if these percentages and tiered amounts come from the County or the State. Jeremy said the numbers come from the State for Ulster County.

Public Comments Other Business:

Nick Rider-Rosendale Fire Chief – Brought his concerns of the Rosendale Water District of maintenance needed for fire hydrant locations. Supervisor Walsh asked if they could submit a detailed list of the locations and the maintenance concerns for the particular hydrants and it will be reviewed with the Superintendent.

Councilman Havranek made a motion that the Town Board of the Town of Rosendale approve the minutes for January 4th and January 11th. Seconded by Councilmember Muller: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Committee Reports:

Councilman Havranek –

Police – There are four part timers that have left for full time positions elsewhere. This leaves two full-time police officers, four part time police officers and this is making it difficult for the Chief to give us complete coverage. As far as vehicles are concerned all vehicles are operational, the Chief has filed for a Grant for live scan for fingerprinting, accreditation is still moving forward, and we have letter thanking Eric Funiccus for his professionalism. The Chief presented his annual report to the board at our last meeting and are waiting for the Boards approval to post onto the website. There were 0 use of force in 2023. The stats for the Police Department thus far are 270 calls for service, 10 criminal cases, 9 arrests, one personal injury accident and 5 property damage accidents. The next meeting is scheduled for February 23rd at the Rondout Municipal Center at 3:30PM. Police revenue was \$667.63.

Water/Sewer – The Sewer Plant project is starting up again due to the mild winter. Terry Johnson is going over the bypass plan. This plan is needed as the contractor is going to start demolishing the headworks, this is the area where the wastewater enters the plant. The work includes piping, grinder and three new pumps. The next Water Commission meeting is scheduled for April 26th at 5:00PM at the Rondout Municipal Center at the old Bistro location. Revenue for Sewer was \$28,193.15 and Water was \$30,654.91. High Falls Water revenue currently has not been submitted.

Highway - The staff is conducting tree work on James St., Hickory Bush Rd., and Church St. the Highway Superintendent was waiting on Ulster County Resource Recovery to bring their mulching machine to the Transfer Station to take care of the brush piles. Highway revenue was \$227.40.

Councilmember Muller –

Bookkeeper - Kim is doing well with her new job and training Taylor as she learns her new role in various aspects of the position. They are working on 1099s, annual workers compensation invoice and the NYS retirement invoice. The tax payment from the tax collection was 2 million dollars. Donna in HR tasks have been updating the approved hourly and salary rates needed for January payroll, processing W2s and filing quarterly payroll taxes.

Food Pantry – They did not meet in January.

RMC - Joe has been reorganizing purging items from the building and property locations, Rosendale Police Department completed the move for the new locker room location. The baby changing station from that room has been relocated into

the women's main hall bathroom and a new changing station has been ordered for the Men's main hall bathroom. The vending machines are in the new location. The snack machine is cash only until the card reader is repaired. The Black Board Bistro is now vacated and discussions of how to utilize the space is in process. The SAFCO door locking system should be in place by February. Joe is following up with the Historian in reference to the old telephone booth and new display for the Rosendale hallway. All three Army Core Generators have been auctioned off and two have been picked up. RMC storage shed project will be looked into in the Spring and the loading dock replacement is being reviewed as well as outer doors.

Dog Control - January 2023 there were 5 new dog licenses, 28 renewed and 1 new tag bringing in \$241.00 with \$196.00 for the Supervisor and \$45.00 for Agriculture and Markets.

Town Clerk – Revenue for December 2022 \$6,883.03 and January 2023 \$15,801.05.

Transfer Station – Revenue for January was \$5,187.00 Bookkeeper and \$2,580.00 from Town Clerk's Office.

Justice – I reviewed both December and January books and all was in order.

Councilmember Sweeney –

Assessor – The Assessor, Jeremy, is currently reviewing and approving exemptions as they come in. The Assessor Clerk, Melissa, has started reaching out to property owners who have not submitted their exemptions yet. The Assessor's Office is also reviewing and entering building permits, certificates of completion and certificates of occupancy as they come in. They continue to work on processing sales and issuing 911 addresses when requested. They are dealing with many address changes triggered by the Town and County tax bill. They are taking photos and inspecting new construction, renovations, and additions. The Assessor is also working on placing value on new construction for the upcoming 2023 assessment role and a second notice notifying property owners of the senior citizens exemption was sent via postcard.

Youth - The Youth Center was rented for two separate days in the month of January and is available to be rented on Sundays. Saturday morning art labs will be happening for the rest of the month. There are 15 children signed up currently during spring break. Matt is considering running a full day program if possible and is looking into doing in town field trips, some examples would include maybe the Theater or the Library. The first Monday of each month is when they have their meetings at 7:30 PM. Please call the Youth Center for more information.

Eldercare Assistance Committee – They are encouraging any seniors with food insecurities to call the Rosedale Food Pantry. They are considering having a senior fair possibly in the warmer weather. Details will be confirmed as Barbara mentioned at some point they would like to create a brochure featuring Rosedale events put forth by the Ulster County Office of the Aging.

Recreation - The Recreation Center is available to rent, call Dorene for more information at 845-658-8198.

Tax Collector – The Tax Collector has collected over five million dollars. Three million five hundred **Thousand** of that was paid to the town against the warrant. Many people seem to be paying on time and for the month of February there is 1% penalty for late payments. There have been a few credit card payments made through the Town Clerk and one bounce check. **March 8, 2023 Town Board meeting amendment of February 8, 2023 minutes to included the amount as (Thousand).**

Supervisor Walsh – Read Financial Reports

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to approve Erich Funccius as Police officer at \$25.09 per hour for 40 hours per week effective March 1, 2023. Seconded by Councilman Havranek; ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to approve Barbara Piombino to the Eldercare Assistance Committee for a 3-year term expiring December 31, 2025. Seconded by Councilmember Sweeney; ROLL VOT 4 Yes.

Speaker – Matt Gillis & Shawn Beqaj- Archtop Fiber

Matt and Shawn presented the plan to provide symmetrical multi-Gigabit, fiber internet and phone services over an XGS-

PON fiber network. This officially launched on June 14, 2022, locations of Manhattan, Albany and now in the iPark 87 building in Kingston, NY. They are working with the local towns as they go through the area discussing the unserved and underserved. Supervisor Walsh discussed the concern of a franchise agreement needed as well as the application process and multiple funding programs such as BEAD (Broadband Equity, access & Deployment), BTOP (Broadband Technology Opportunities Program), ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act), and NYS ConnectALL Program. Councilman Havranek asked about the main hub of the fiberoptics and how it would affect Rosendale. Matt mentioned the main connection from Manhattan is connected by hub site every 20 kilometers or so and is self-healing should there be a split to not interrupt the connection. Supervisor Walsh discussed connectivity with the new poles in Rosendale or underground and a statement of if you are 300 feet or more from the nearest connection there may be a charge to connect. So far 75,000.00 location completed in New York and have not had a need to charge. Councilman Havranek asked for an approximate cost to the resident considered, how long it would take and time of hitting Rosendale for completion. Cost may be at 150 megabits for no more than \$59.00 with multiple gig services available, Construction began in Saugerties in the month of May lighting up customers in month of June with the entire projected to be completed in 18 months. Marty Einneman a resident discussed repair encumbrance to residents and amount of time for repair concerns. Supervisor Walsh stated this will be placed on the March Town Board Agenda.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to cancel the Special Town Board meeting Friday, February 10, 2023. Seconded by Councilman Havranek: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Resolution 02-2023-#5 - Supervisor Walsh made a motion to that the Town Board of the Town of Rosendale approve the contract with Ulster County ARPA funds to the Water District for the construction of a new Water Tower and authorize the Supervisor to sign the Sewer and Water subaward agreement. Seconded by Councilman Havranek: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to pay the vouchers/bills. Seconded by Councilman Havranek: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

GEN FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 56 – 79	\$17,540.09
HIGHWAY FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 27 – 29	\$ 1,381.89
WATER FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 13 – 21	\$ 1,694.25
SEWER FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 12 – 19	\$ 598.51
SPEC. LIGHT FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 2	\$ 1,077.09
RMC FUND	ABSTRACT 2	VOUCHERS 3 - 24	\$42,384.53

William Moylan - Fire District – Asked is the Town still working on the studies for on the Fire Districts in the town. Supervisor Walsh said it is in process waiting on Fire District information and letter from Tillson.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 8:58PM for Local Law #1 2023 for the tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and ambulance personnel. Seconded by Councilmember Sweeney: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to set the Public Hearing for Local Law #2 of 2023 to increase income limits relative to the Senior Citizen Tax Exemptions scheduled for the 16th day of February 2023, at 5PM, to be held at Rondout Municipal Center, 1915 Lucas Ave, Cottekill, NY. Seconded by Councilmember Muller: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to set the Public Hearing for Local Law #3 of 2023 to provide exemptions for disabled persons with limited income scheduled for the 16th day of February 2023, at 5PM, to be held at Rondout Municipal Center, 1915 Lucas Ave, Cottekill, NY. Seconded by Councilmember Muller: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to enter into executive session at 9:28PM to discuss the employment of a particular person/persons and returned from executive session at 10:03PM.

Supervisor Walsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:04PM. Seconded by Councilman Havranek: ROLL VOTE 4 Yes.

Respectfully Submitted by

Christine Harrison
Deputy Town Clerk