

PRESENT: Supervisor Newlin; Councilmembers Bax, Edwards, Johnson and Palmer; Attorney Leone; Deputy Attorney Koryl; Building Inspector Masters; Police Chief Salada; Deputy Supervisor Elgin; Town Engineer Lannon; 1 Press; 9 residents and Clerk Donna Garfinkel

The Supervisor opened the regular meeting at 7:10 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent reflection.

RESIDENTS STATEMENTS:

Deal, Thomas, - 4645 Perry Court, recognized that he and the Town Board have been on opposite ends of the political spectrum, but thanks the Board for their service and commitment to the Town of Lewiston.

AGENDA

Following additions requested: Newlin: discuss proposed changes with the New York Power Authority and the Power Coalition; Update on grant for a Command Center for the Police Dept.; letter to encouraging the State to remove Special District Tax exemption for Fire Co. from the Power Authority.

Edwards requested to address the land dispute issue at Ridgeview at Lewiston. Leone said the parties have entered into a letter of intent, which has a variety of aspects to it. Assuming this closes, the project should be good to go.

Johnson MOVED to approve the agenda, as amended, Seconded by Edwards and Carried 5 – 0.

MINUTES

Johnson MOVED to approve the minutes of 10/26/09 (RTBM), 11/23/09 (Public Hearing) and 11/23/09 (RTBM), Seconded by Bax and Carried 5 – 0.

OLD BUSINESS

Cell phone use during Board meeting: Phones cause some electronic interference with the recorder.

Palmer suggest the Supervisor ask residents to put their phones on vibrate, or quiet mode as to not to disrupt the meeting in progress.

Palmer MOVED to have the Supervisor remind residents at the beginning of each meeting to put cell phones on vibrate or quiet mode as to not distrust the meeting, Seconded by Bax and Carried 5 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS – CLERK’S CORRESPONDENCE

Item No. 1: Town Clerk request employees carry over Personal Days

Edwards MOVED to allow Garfinkel, Donna (2); Joseph, Barbara (2) and Norwich, Kevin (1) carry over of Personal Days, Seconded by Johnson and Carried 5 – 0.

Item No. 2: Town Assessor – Transfer request

Transfer request to pay off balance of computer processors.

Johnson MOVED to transfer \$351.99 from A-1355-0400 to A-1355-02500, Seconded by Bax and Carried 5 – 0.

Newlin wanted to address all and speak, as it is his last formal meeting as Supervisor.

Newlin is a very grateful person to be sitting here. First thanks to the residents, who have given him this wonderful opportunity to serve the Town that he grew up in. Newlin tried his very best to do it credit and make it a better place to live. Newlin has been fortunate to work with the present and past Boards to make some considerable progress.

Newlin thanked his wife, Kris for her support. Being a public official is not the easiest thing in the world and is subject to a lot of stresses that come with the job and for better or for worse it is the spouse that has to deal with most of that.

Newlin thanked staff members Barb Cich, his secretary; she really helps run the office and is a terrific asset. Alice DiRamio, was a stalwart Budget Officer, she worked part-time and did a great job. Best Budget Officer the Town of Lewiston has ever had.

Newlin thanked Deputy Supervisor Evan Elgin, a great friend and has worked by Newlin's side for many years on many projects. Elgin has helped the Town progress when it came to servicing computer equipment.

Newlin thanked department heads for making his life a lot easier. Bob Nablo, Carol Brandon, and Deputy Town Clerk's.

The Attorneys, who have guided the Town through a lot of difficult decisions.

Town Engineer Lannon, for having a great grasp of the issues. Newlin believes Lannon is the best engineer in Niagara County.

Chief Salads is a great Police Chief. A testament to him is the reduction in calls to the department.

Newlin thanked the present Board and prior Boards members. The Supervisor, for better or for worse, gets a lot of heat when it comes to decisions, but all the agreements are brought to the Board and Newlin has received good advice and made the agreements better. Newlin could not have been as successful without their kind support and friendship.

Newlin thanked his mother, who has always been there to support him. He thanked his late father, who more than anyone was influential in him going into politics.

There are three issues Newlin feels Lewiston made the most progress on during his time as Supervisor. In the six years that has been Supervisor the Town tax has decreased, about \$70 a year.

Energy costs are down because of the work of this Board. The County, State and Schools have all signed deals with the Power Authority to participate in an agreement with them. This is the only level of government that has actually taken the power and given it back to the people, and as a result Lewiston pays the lowest electrical rates in western New York.

Any fair observer will say Lewiston has made remarkable strides as a community in the last 6-years. Credit should be given to the Town Board and Village Trustees.

Many investments have been made and been successful in the arts and history. That is what makes Lewiston special.

Newlin wanted the residents to know how important it is to have a free and open ambiguous press.

Newlin believes Lewiston has two challenges in the future and hopes the coming Board keeps them in mind. The environment, in respect to Modern Landfill and Chemical Waste Management, will be a big challenge.

Residents should look everyday, at what is here to appreciate in Lewiston. Lewiston is a hidden jewel. Lewiston is special, in Newlin's opinion; it is the very best of a small town and brings some of the best measures of sophistication of arts and historical programming.

SUPERVISOR NEWLIN

The Lewiston Police Department faces several challenges. Lewiston is unique in that it sits on a national border with a national bridge crossing, has a hydro plant and many schools and a University. Lewiston could be a vulnerable place as a target for people who do not wish us well.

Newlin has been working with the Police Department and Grant Writer Rotella on a possible command center. Should a disaster, small or large take place, we'll be able to set up communications and control center near the incident. This would help coordinate the various law enforcement agents.

Rotella has reported Lewiston is not likely to receive the grant. Largely because Lewiston's per/capita income is high.

Chief Salada said a Command Post allows his department to set-up an office at any scene. It gives access to computers, radios on police and fire frequencies, lights, generators and any other equipment necessary. It gives direct communication to the Sheriff department, Fire Department, State Police, Border Patrol, Customs, Coast Guard, Niagara University security and Power Authority security. No Command Post is a weakness.

Palmer has had personnel experience with the importance of command posts in Niagara Falls. They are useful on a day-to-day basis also.

Palmer would hope that someone like the Power Authority, or who would be a benefactor of something like this, would be willing to contribute some of the expense. Palmer suggests doing something in conjunction with the fire companies.

Newlin said the dollar amount they have heard is \$75,000 for equipment and \$25,000 for a trailer. There is about \$1.1 million unexpended money in the Power Authority account.

Johnson feels in the wake of what is happening through-out the world, this is positive.

Edwards agrees.

Newlin will forward information to the Board by e-mail.

Newlin received a letter from the Chairman of the Legislature, who also is the Chairman of the Niagara Power Coalition asking Coalition members if there is an interest in pursuing a change to the deal with the Power Authority similar to what Erie County is pursuing.

Erie County is going to accelerate, in the first 20-years, all the payments that were to be made in 50-years.

Newlin does not believe Lewiston needs that flow of revenue right now. Newlin strongly recommends Lewiston does not compress the funding into the first 20-years.

Palmer, Bax and Johnson all agree it is not good planning to change the distribution years. 50-years is good for longevity.

Johnson MOVED to forward a letter stating that Lewiston does not have an interest in altering the current agreement with the Power Authority in regards to term, Seconded by Bax and Carried 5 – 0.

Newlin feels it is a tragedy the State has provided a special exemption for the Power Authority from paying local fire district taxes. The Fire Companies do the best on a volunteering basis, saving the town millions of dollars a year. If the Power Authority paid the same fire district tax homeowners and businesses do, the fire tax would decrease considerable.

Newlin MOVED to forward a letter to the Governor, Assembly and the State Senate to request they repeal the exemption the Power Authority enjoys from the payment of Fire District Special tax, Seconded by Johnson and Carried 5 – 0.

COUNCILMAN EDWARDS

Edwards would like to give thanks to the citizens of Lewiston for allowing him the privilege to serve Lewiston. It has been a wonderful experience. The Board has always been a team. Whether the Board disagreed or agreed, at the end of the day the Board always came to some type of compromise or decision to do the right thing for the residents.

Employees at the Town Hall are fine individuals. They treat citizens great. Department heads, highway employees, water employees and sewer employees are great.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON

Johnson asked Lannon if the scoping of the drainage pipe at Riverwalk has been completed. Lannon not sure if it has been done. Supervisor Elect Reiter needs to be updated on this situation.

Johnson has served as a Board member for 14 years, and without a doubt this Board has worked very closely together. The Board has not always agreed. It's good to disagree. There maybe an idea that someone brings up and it maybe the answer.

Johnson thanked Edwards for his time and help and how he really got into the job.

Johnson thanked Newlin for his 6-years of direction and service, and his great work on the Power Authority deal. Newlin kept the Board apprised of all issues. Newlin is a true politician and a gentleman.

COUNCILMAN BAX

In light of all the agreements and disagreements, the Board did become friends.

It was an honor and pleasure to sit on the Board with Newlin and Edwards. It has been an education and wouldn't have been the same without the caliber of person of Newlin and Edwards. Bax is sorry to see them go.

COUNCILMAN PALMER

Three years ago when he took the seat on the Board he did not know much about being an elected official, but was quickly indoctrinated and accepted by Newlin and Edwards. Thanked them both for their service and friendship.

Palmer said Newlin established a collaborative atmosphere for the Board. Newlin left Lewiston in better shape, 6-years later, than it was before.

Newlin is an intelligent hard dedicated worker and wishes him luck in the future.

Bax MOVED to adjourn, Seconded by Edwards and Carried 5 – 0. (8:00 p.m.)

Transcribed and Submitted by,

Donna Garfinkel
Deputy Town Clerk