

The special meeting of the Groveland Town Board was held on Tuesday March 17, 2020 at the Town Hall.

Present: Bill Carman, Supervisor; Bill Devine, Town Councilmember & Deputy Supervisor; Steve Atterbury, Councilmember; Ron Niedermaier, Councilmember; Amy Phelps, Councilmember

Absent: None

Supervisor called the meeting to order @ 11:53 a.m. Supervisor Carman led the pledge to the flag.

Information handed out/or acknowledged:

1. Posting on town website
2. Email from OCA for Court closure

Old/New Business:

CORONAVIRUS CLOSURES- Supervisor Carman attended an emergency meeting with the Livingston County Board of Supervisors and it was stated that Livingston County is in a State of Emergency. They are now working out of the Emergency Operation Center at Hamptons Corner facility. Most everyone is aware that there are no visitors allowed at the Jail and the Nursing home is only allowing families to attend for end of life situations. All schools in Livingston County are closed with some providing lunches to students during the week. The senior nutrition center is closed but are providing lunches to those that have requested by delivering.

Supervisor Carman directed the closure of the town hall to the public, the town website and the townclerk's answering machine reflects the closure and what our residents can do should they need to come to the town hall. The Office of Court Administration has closed all court effective 5 pm Monday March 16, 2020. All meetings that have been scheduled for the town hall have been canceled with a TBD time to reschedule.

NON- ESSENTIAL STAFFING- The accountant provided a 6 week assessment for payroll purposes for non- essential staffing that has been instructed not to come to work at either the town court or the town clerk's office. The court was mandated by the State to close at 5pm Monday March 16, 2020 until May 1, 2020. The State also mandate that all local government reduce their staffing by 50%, thus effecting the town clerk's office by laying off the deputy town clerk.

Supervisor Carman stated that he feels that this is an unprecedented circumstance and that we have budgeted for the salaries of the staff and we should pay them according to their average hours.

Councilmember Phelps stated that in the news they have discussed unemployment for a specified time frame as it relates to this virus. Would it be best to see what rules apply for unemployment and then pay them following what unemployment does not pay.

Councilmember Devine stated that as the rules sit now if they collect unemployment then the town cannot pay them what the difference is. They are town employees and we would need to provide them paperwork for unemployment purposes. Money is in the budget now to pay them, the town can see what the rules will be from NYS for unemployment as it relates to the coronavirus mandates.

Councilmember Atterbury stated that the employees should get paid from the town there is no idea how long it will take the employees to receive their benefits.

Councilmember Phelps stated that the employees should get paid following the accountants average of hours and once the rules come out as it relates to the unemployment for the coronavirus the Supervisor should review to see if the employees would qualify for unemployment.

Supervisor Carman that he will keep updated as it relates to unemeployment.

A motion by Councilmember Atterbury and seconded by Councilmember Niedermaier to pay Sarah Driscoll, Deb Coburn and Keitha Sleggs the average hours per week until May 1, 2020, if the rules following the states recommendation for unemployment benefits change for the coronavirus layoffs then the employees will be asked by the Supervisor to apply for unemployment benefits. Motion carried unanimously.

HIGHWAY EMPLOYEES- Supervisor stated that all other towns in the county are keeping their highway crews working. Supervisor Carman reiterated that the town must follow the mandates set forth by the State. Supervisor feels they are essential town employees.

Councilmember Phelps did not think they needed to reduce their numbers as they can keep the social distancing requirements.

Councilmember Devine stated that if a highway employee felt they are an “at risk” as stated by the federal government guidelines then they can choose to not work but the decision should be theirs to make but should use their accrued time for payroll purposes.

A motion by Councilmember Niedermaier and seconded by Councilmember Atterbury that the town highway employees are essential employees to the town and if the employee chooses to not work due to “at risk” following the federal guidelines the employee may do so but will use accrued time for payroll purposes. Motion carried unanimously.

FUTURE MEETING PREPARATIONS- The next town board meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2020. Supervisor recommended for the meeting to be auditing the voucher and approve abstract, along with very minor town business such as resolutions. Supervisor recommends no other business to be done that evening. The Supervisor recommended the auditing part of the bills may be done on an individual basis prior to the board meeting following the social distancing recommendations. The town will postpone the moratorium public hearing until the May town board meeting.

Board discussion: Agreed with the Supervisor.

Supervisor Carman also provided a sample of what is being done at the County buildings for screening purposes prior to entering the buildings. This is a recommendation potentially for the town board meeting in April.

Board reviewed the paperwork and will implement at the next meeting as the board meetings need to allow for the public the opportunity to attend following open meetings law.

ASSITANCE FOR TOWN RESIDENTS- A letter from the town Supervisor will be posted on the town’s website and advertised for the residents to contact the town for assistance of essential items. Supervisor Carman discussed with Emergency Management Coordinator, Kevin Niedermaier about getting items such as water and paper supplies for residents that may not have been able to obtain during this national pandemic. The Supervisor wants to make sure no residents that are shut-ins or are a vulnerable person to this virus the town is doing everything possible to assist them.

Councilmember Phelps stated that the county has a great handle on the needs of the community and follow closely the needs of the students, elderly and anyone effected by the virus. The county will move their employees to what department may need assistance to keep on top of the needs of the community.

Councilmember Phelps left the meeting at 12:46p.m.

Councilmember Niedermaier will work with Cindy Dennison to see if she has any ideas regarding the elderly or vulnerable residents that we can contact to make sure they are ok.

Councilmember Devine stated that Cindy Flowers is the Superintendent of Schools at Geneseo and she may have knowledge of students that may be in need as well.

A motion by Councilmember Niedermaier and seconded by Councilmember Atterbury to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:00p.m. The next meeting will be the regular meeting April 09, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m. at the town hall.

Kimberly D. Burgess, Town Clerk
Town of Groveland

Dated: March 17, 2020