

REGULAR MEETING

DECEMBER 2, 2021

Minutes of a Regular Meeting held by the Town of Shawangunk Town Board, County of Ulster, State of New York, at the Town Office Building at 14 Central Avenue, Walkkill, NY on the **2nd day of December 2021** at 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT were Supervisor John Valk, Councilman Brian Amthor, Councilman Adrian DeWitt, Councilman Matthew Watkins, and Town Clerk Jane Rascoe. Also, present were Police Chief Gerry Marlatt, Councilman Elect and Planning Board Member Alex Danon, Deputy Highway Superintendent Rich Blazeski and Assessor Curt Schoeberl. Councilman Miller was absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Supervisor Valk acknowledged the passing of Dawn Schoppman, who worked for the Town for many years. He led the Town Board in a moment of silence and the pledge to the flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Amthor and seconded by Councilman Watkins to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on November 16, 2021, and the Regular Meeting held on November 18, 2021.

VOTE: Councilman Watkins, aye, Councilman DeWitt, aye, Councilman Amthor, aye, Supervisor Valk, aye. Councilman Miller, absent.

CORRESPONDENCE

Notice of Public Hearing from the Town of Crawford on 12/16/21 on Grievance Day was received.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Blue Chip Farms

Mr. David Alexanian, on behalf of Blue-Chip Farms, introduced himself and explained that he had previously met with Supervisor Valk to discuss a development plan for the property. He explained that Blue Chip Farms was established in the 1960's and still survives today. The farm consists of 664 acres. The farm has bred Olympic gold medal winners and many champion race horses. Their method of horse breeding is under threat and faces tough competition. Mr. Grossman's goal is to keep the horse farm alive. The concept plan is to downsize the horse farm to 200 acres. Mr. Alexanian made a presentation on the existing farm and displayed examples of how they propose to develop the property. The plan proposes to build into the existing landscape single family homes, ecofriendly cottages for short term rentals, two restaurants, a café, spa, multi-use theatre, and a golf course.

Supervisor Valk explained that he invited Mr. Alexanian to come to the Town Board to give this presentation so the public would be aware of the facts prior to applying to the Planning Board.

Mrs. Julie Craner inquired about similar operations that currently operate on less property than Blue Chip. Mr. Alexanian stated he could not give examples, but Mr. Grossman could. He added that Mr. Grossman employs a lot of people in the area and wishes to keep the farm alive. Mr. Curt Schoeberl inquired if the residential structures were attached. Mr. Alexanian stated that there would be 1200 square foot bungalows used for short term rentals. There would be homesites for the single-family homes. Their plan for roof to table would be subterranean homes with views with the concept of green roofs. Councilman Amthor inquired if solar would be utilized. Mr. Rich Blazeski inquired the location of the farm and the golf course. Mr. Alexanian explained that the farm is north of Bates Lane, and the golf course would be on the south side. They would have a nine- or twelve-hole golf course and a fitness center that would be open to the public with one area for members. Mr. Schoeberl inquired the timetable for the total build out. Mr. Alexanian stated his best guess would be 18 months, possibly in phases. Supervisor Valk commented that if Blue Chip has to develop, this is a good start to maintain the rural character of the land. He thanked Mr. Alexanian for attending the meeting.

Vision of Wallkill

Julie Craner and Donna Barczak, representing Vision of Wallkill spoke to the Town Board about holding a joint event with the Senior Celebration Group from the High School. The event would be a "Duck Derby Race" utilizing the Wallkill River. The plastic ducks would be launched from Popp Park and finish at the fire department landing on the other side of the bank. They explained that they are in the process of getting permission for those locations. The ducks would be collected with a broom across the river. It would be a great way to involve the entire community, and a great use of the river. Ms. Craner advised that Valley Central holds a similar event. The logistics have to be worked out. V.O.W. is requesting the insurance for the event be covered by the Town. The event will be scheduled for May 2022. The Town Board was in support of holding the event.

Boy Scouts

A group of six boy scouts were in attendance at the meeting. Eli Nichol, representing the group, inquired with the Town Board the importance of constitutional rights and their role in the community. Supervisor Valk responded that the constitution provides for free elections and gives the right for anyone to speak to the board. Councilman Watkins inquired if the boy scouts ever read the constitution, and if not, they should as they would understand. He mentioned that certain rights are being challenged on how the Supreme Court interrupts those rights. Councilman Watkins raised the fact that the constitution protects your property. He also brought up that there is a New York State Constitution which the Town Board is obligated to abide by. Councilman Amthor credits the constitution for allowing different opinions. He stressed with today's social media, it is important to have respect for each other and respect for allowing for diversity. He stressed the importance to listen and have an open point of view, and get along with one another. Police Chief Marlatt added that fire, police and EMS can come onto your property if assistance is needed.