

**Regular July Meeting  
July 17, 2024**

**ROLL CALL**

Supervisor Johnson opened the Regular Town Board Meeting at 5:30 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor called roll with the following results:

Present in person: Councilmen Mallette, Olmstead and Mayhew with Clerk Gunn and Attorney Gilbert also present.

Absent: Superintendent Alfano and Councilman Bailey-Swisher

**MINUTES From Last Meeting**

Supervisor called for a motion from the Board to accept the minutes from the June Town Board Meeting. These minutes have been emailed in advance to the Council members.

**Motion 24-07-01** made by Councilman Olmstead, Seconded by Mallette

Accept the June 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes .

Vote: Olmstead, Mayhew & Mallette Yes

Bailey-Swisher - Absent.

**Motion approved.**

**BOARD REPORTS**

Acting Zoning Officer Johnson reported 5 applications for Zoning Permits.

Open issues with the Zoning Citations issued to Mr. Christopher Valenti and Mr. Kevin Zielinski

Action items on those Citations:

Attorney Gilbert will write letters to the Good Morning Realtor and Lewis County Clerk placing a notice of Zoning Violation on the parcel in question, as well as notifying Mr. Valenti's Attorney of our actions.

Acting Zoning Officer Johnson will issue a letter to Mr. Zielinski correcting the actual items not meeting the Town Zoning Law on this parcel.

A report on the July 11<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting was presented by Councilman Olmstead, who attended that meeting. The Planning Board questioned Mr. Olmstead about the changes in the Zoning Officer position. Mr. Olmstead explained how the activities of the Zoning Officer were going to be carried out by Supervisor Johnson until the duties of the position are accepted by the Lewis County Building Codes department, or another person is placed in the Town position. The Planning Board approved the application by Mr. Zielinski for a "cabin colony" to be built at the intersection of the Middle Road and the Sweeney Road. This is pending State Department of Health approvals. Mr. Thisse is representing the Zielinskis in this effort. The Planning Board should issue a "Special Use" permit for this activity. A single Zoning Permit should be issued for the area being used by the proposed cabins. The County Codes Department will issue the building permits and inspect all phases of construction.

## **ATTORNEY REPORT**

Mr. Gilbert reported the complete resolution of the Zoning Citation against the Brown's is waiting for Attorney Young to complete the settlement agreement for the Court. This is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Mr. Gilbert is waiting for the final documents from Mr. Darren Pominville's Attorney that will turn over the recently paved portion of the Cemetery Road to the Town of Greig. Upon the completion of the legal documents and the roads inspection by the County Highway Superintendent, the Town Supervisor will need a resolution from the Town Board authorizing him to sign for the Town's acceptance and will add this road to its inventory of town roads.

## **OLD/ NEW BUSINESS**

Councilman Mallette informed the Board that he has been working on the Town's Zoning Law to insure the wording is correct following the division of duties between a Town Zoning Officer and the Town Code Enforcement official. In the past Zoning Law the functions of Zoning Enforcement and Codes Enforcement were done by the same individual. Following a Local Law, passed a few years ago, the Code Enforcement duties went to the Lewis County Codes Enforcement Department, and the Zoning Enforcement went to a Zoning Officer. The wording for the specific enforcement responsibility for Zoning and Codes were in need of clarification within the Zoning Law.

The original "Word" document needed to be worked on is in place. It is now time to integrate two other Zoning Law changes into this master "Word" document. They currently exist only as a "PDF" document and Mr. Mallette is requesting help from Attorney Gilbert to convert these two "PDF" documents into "Word" Documents to allow editing and integration into a single Master Zoning Law file. Attorney Gilbert agreed to lend support to this effort and recommended the Town hold a Public Hearing upon completion of this effort to allow the public to comment on the word changes made to the document.

Supervisor Johnson reported on the Highway Roof project. The Contractors schedule is to start in August and finish during October. Aubertine and Currier will act as the "Clerk of the Works" on the Town's behalf for the project. The Attorney being used by the Town for the Bond purchase function says we should have the Bond closing within the next two weeks. The Bond should run about \$32,000 per year for the next 10 years.

Mr. Johnson reported that he has been in communication with several other Town Supervisors and County Legislators concerning the recently publicized OSHA requirements for Volunteer Fire Departments. If these changes are made a requirement, it is predicted most fire departments would be forced to close. Supervisor Johnson joined the other officials by sending letters to all associated State Officials protesting these OSHA changes.

Supervisor Johnson informed the Board that the Town of Greig will not qualify for the USDA Grant he had applied for. It was intended to pay for 45% of a new Highway Truck to replace the existing 2014 Truck in our fleet. The median income for a community needed to be below \$61,650 per year and the township is at \$62,850 per year. Mr. Johnson says we could acquire a loan from the USDA for a little over 4%. Current interest for a Bond is running 4.6% and is expected to come down soon. Mr. Johnson said, in his opinion, it would be much easier to obtain a regular Bond rather than applying for the USDA loan. He estimates a Bond would run about \$32,000 per year.

Mr. Johnson requested a motion to rescind Resolution 2024-06-#2 seeking a Grant of \$124,564 and a Loan of \$152,245 from the USDA for the purchase of a Highway Department Truck

**Motion 24-07-02** made by Councilman Mallette , Seconded by Olmstead  
Rescind Resolution 2024-06-#2 to seek a Grant and Loan from the USDA for a total of \$276,809  
Vote: Olmstead, Mayhew, Johnson & Mallette Yes Bailey-Swisher - Absent.  
**Motion approved.**

Supervisor Johnson suggests the Board wait for next month to create a resolution to purchase a Bond for \$250,000 for a new Highway Department Truck. This should cost about \$32,000 per year. He will research the existing Bond for its expiration date. He thinks it is either one or two payments of \$32,000 per year left to payoff.

Supervisor Johnson reports Verizon has first right to bid on the purchase of the current lease of the land where the Cell Tower is located. They were put on notice that we are looking to sell the lease receivables. They have until August 15<sup>th</sup> to respond. Their first offer was way below competitive bids and Mr. Johnson does not feel they will meet the current bid amount. After August 15<sup>th</sup>, Attorney Gilbert and Supervisor Johnson will proceed with the sale and the proceeds should be available by October 2024. Under State guidance, the proceeds will be applied to the best use for parcel tax reductions.

Supervisor Johnson requests Board motion to accept the following Pro-Housing Communities Resolution

**Pro-Housing Communities Resolution**

RESOLUTION No: 2024-07-1  
moved and seconded that

WHEREAS, the Town of Greig (hereinafter “local government”) believes that the lack of housing for New York residents of all ages and income levels negatively impacts the future of New York State’s economic growth and community well-being;

WHEREAS, the housing crisis has negative effects at regional and local levels, we believe that every community must do their part to contribute to housing growth and benefit from the positive impacts a healthy housing market brings to communities;

WHEREAS, we believe that supporting housing production of all kinds in our community will bring multiple benefits, including increasing housing access and choices for current and future residents, providing integrated accessible housing options that meet the needs of people with sensory and mobility disabilities, bringing economic opportunities and vitality to our communities, and allowing workers at all levels to improve their quality of life through living closer to their employment opportunities;

WHEREAS, we believe that evidence showing that infill development that reduces sprawl and supports walkable communities has significant environmental and public health benefits; and

WHEREAS, we believe that affirmatively furthering fair housing and reducing segregation is not only required by law, but is essential for keeping our community strong and vibrant;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that Town of Greig, in order to take positive steps to alleviate the housing crisis, adopts the Pro- Housing Communities pledge, which will have us endeavor to take the following important steps:

1. Streamlining permitting for multifamily housing, affordable housing, accessible housing, accessory dwelling units, and supportive housing.
2. Adopting policies that affirmatively further fair housing.
3. Incorporating regional housing needs into planning decisions.
4. Increasing development capacity for residential uses.
5. Enacting policies that encourage a broad range of housing development, including multifamily housing, affordable housing, accessible housing, accessory dwelling units, and supportive housing.

This is to certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of this resolution with the original solution now on file in this office and that the same is a correct and true copy of such original resolution and the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and the official seal of the Town of Greig this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

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**Motion 24-07-03** made by Councilman Olmstead, Seconded by Mallette  
Adopt the **Pro-Housing Communities Resolution** as a Town of Greig resolution.

Discussion included Councilman Olmstead asking what the “streamlining permitting” meant for the Town. Supervisor Johnson said his interpretation was that the Town would not purposely put road blocks in the process for permits for the mentioned type of housing. Having this resolution in place might help qualify the Town in future Grant Applications.

Councilman Mayhew indicated she was suspicious of some government programs that could lead to a change in our community make-up. This could include housing programs for the relocation of some defined groups needing settlement. Too much unknown in her opinion.

Vote: Olmstead, Mallette & Johnson Yes

Bailey-Swisher – Absent Mayhew - No

**Motion approved.**

Supervisor Johnson told of some difficulties using the key on the main door into the Town Hall. He sprayed it with lubricant and it seemed to do the trick. However, the incident made him rethink the idea of a “keypad control”, which would allow tracking as to who entered the building and when. Justice Evans told Mr. Johnson she was applying for a security upgrade grant from the Justice Department that could include cameras for inside and outside recording of activity on the grounds. Supervisor suggested waiting until that application is resolved.

Supervisor reported on a \$1.496 million grant awarded to the Town of Greig and Lewis County for the replacement of the Eatonville Road bridge over Otter Creek. Lewis County will be the lead agency contracting for the engineering design and construction. The Town will be responsible for an \$85,000 contribution to the project. Work will be done in 2025 construction season. In the mean time, the bridge

remains flagged by the State and requires caution and weight limitations for use.

Supervisor Johnson reported that he and Tom Osborne, County Legislator, attended the July meeting of the Black River Four Wheeler Club. Discussions were had about more controlled behavior of riders on local roads. There was an agreement that there was an improved behavior over last year due to increased signage, however it would not hurt to have some Sheriff and DEC presence during some peak travel times.

Supervisor announced the start of negotiations with the Union on a town employment contract. Mr. Johnson is looking for a Board Member to join him as the team representing the Town along with the Attorney. Councilman Mallette volunteered to be on the team.

Humane Society has presented a bill for the care of a stray dog recently found on the Steam Mill Road. The dog was in need of medical care when found and the bill of \$481 from the North Country Veterinary Services was presented to the Town. Supervisor Johnson volunteered that his wife has experience with Animal Shelter management and will assist in negotiation with the clinic and Animal Shelter over the care bills.

Playground equipment installation discussions were had. Highway Superintendent Alfano indicated his department could accomplish the digging of the playground area needing a “play-ground carpet” of wood chips. Councilman Mallette has looked into wood chip products that qualify as accepted “play-ground carpet”. He believes the “Red Deer” farm on Rt 177 provides a product for \$27 per yard. It is estimated we would need about 50 yards of this material. We have accepted chips donated by the Aden Brothers in the past, but Mr. Mallette did not feel these were to be considered “play-ground carpet”. Adens does offer a “double process”, making the chips a finer material, but Mr. Mallette is not sure if that material is to be accepted as qualifying. The cost of that material \$350 per truck load and it is estimated we would need two truck loads. Councilman Olmstead will continue to organize the installation. Supervisor Johnson will attempt to get the Okay for Aden chips.

Supervisor Johnson presented some budget adjustments needed to keep the budgeted expense accounts in the positive state

**Motion 24-07-04** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Mayhew

Move \$700 from account A1990.4, Contingent Account, to A8810.4 , Cemetery Contractual. This cover Cemify Software Annual License Fee

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-05** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Mayhew

Increase Revenue by \$90,000 in account A3501, Contingent Account, to A8810.4 , Cemetery Contractual. This cover Cemify Software Annual License Fee

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-06** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Olmstead

Increase \$90,000 in account DA5112.2, Perm Improvement to Highways, to reflect highway paving expense

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-07** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Olmstead

Move \$5,000 from A8010.11. Zoning Officer Salary to A1420.21, Attorney Other as offset investigation expense.

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-08** made by Councilman Olmstead, Seconded by Mallette

Move \$1,900 from A8010.41. Zoning Officer Expense to A1420.21, Attorney Other as offset investigation expense.

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

**SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Supervisor Johnson gave the report in Mr. Alfano's absence.

The Highway workers had to clean a car after a driver passed a flagman and drove on fresh tar and stone on the South Chases Lake Road while it was being finish coated as the final step in this years paving project. The crew has spent effort cleaning roads following recent rain washouts. A lot of effort was required an the lower end of the Abbey Road due to severe erosion.

**CLERKS REPORT**

Clerk Gunn distributed the June 2024 report by email to Board Members. Report contained details of the following financial actions:

There were general fund collections of:

3 Marriage Licenses	\$ 120.00
6 Zoning Permits	\$ 320.00
Total Collections:	\$ 440.00

The expenditures were:

Town Supervisor as Revenue	\$ 372.50
NY State Health Department for Marriage Licenses	\$ 67.50
Total Payments	\$ 440.00

Tax Collections  
Final Payment to Supervisor \$10,570.00

**Motion 24-07-09:** made by Councilman Mayhew, Seconded by Mallette  
Approve Clerk's financial report as presented.  
Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher  
**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-10:** made by Councilman Olmstead, Seconded by Mayhew  
Enter Executive Session to discuss legal issues surrounding zoning violations. 6:50PM  
Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher  
**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-11:** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Olmstead  
Exit Executive Session. 7:10PM  
Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher  
**Motion approved.**

**Motion 24-07-12:** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Olmstead  
Authorize Attorney Gilbert to issue letters to the property owner, the Realtor and Lewis County regarding the requirement to move a structure on his property, bringing it into compliance with zoning laws.  
Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher  
**Motion approved.**

Supervisor Johnson indicated the grant for the creation of a Comprehensive Plan was in place and the activity should begin around October 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Johnson is asking for community helpers for thjis project. He asked Board members to think about responding as well as expressing a desire to speak with persons who recently applied for consideration for placement on the Town Board.

**SUPERVISORS REPORT**

Mr. Johnson explained some of the anomalies in the checks reported in his financial report. The method of direct vendor payment via bank transfers is complicated by the companies having multiple names and also the rules set by Community Bank.

**VOUCHER REPORT**

July 2024 Abstracts containing “to be paid” vouchers were reviewed by the Board.

Totals expended by fund were:

Highway Abstracts	\$149,935.96
General Abstracts	\$ 23,163.05
Total paid in July 2024 Abstracts =	\$173,099.01

**Motion 24-07-13:** made by Councilman Olmstead, Seconded by Mayhew  
Approve Vouchers  
Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes - Absent Bailey-Swisher  
**Motion approved.**

Being no further business brought forward,

**Motion 24-07-14** made by Councilman Mallette, Seconded by Olmstead

Motion to adjourn 08:07PM

Vote: Olmstead, Johnson, Mallette & Mayhew Yes

- Absent Bailey-Swisher

**Motion approved.**

Respectfully submitted

*Thomas Gunn, Clerk*