

SPECIAL MEETING
September 27, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Chairman Michael A. Tabolt.

Roll Call: All Legislators were present, except Craig Brennan, Andrea Moroughan and Bryan Moser.

Chairman Tabolt offered the Invocation, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

There were 4 persons present.

In the absence of a majority of the Rules and Legislation Committee, Legislator Dolhoff made a motion to waive the rules to allow action on late resolutions, seconded by Legislator King and carried.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Cooperative Extension Executive Director Michele Ledoux briefed the Board on the Copenhagen water issues. She is one member of a locally formed committee representing various agencies that has met weekly since June to monitor water/drought conditions.

During a recent event held in Washington, D.C. she and Frank Pace provided an information sheet "Working through the Drought of 2016" to Congressional and Senator representatives. Ms. Ledoux and Mr. Pace also had an opportunity to brief a Farm Service Agency official in charge of disaster.

Currently, there are two declared Lewis County emergencies. One for the Town of Denmark No. 1 water district that is directly affecting the Village of Copenhagen, including the school district. The water issues were enhanced upon the beginning of school, but officials have been conscientiously responding to use paper plates for meals and conserving water in any way possible.

She stated that Emergency Management Director Robert MacKenzie had identified three farms on Village water, two of which are dairy farms and one heifer farm encompassing just under 1,000 animals. An average heifer consumes an average of 50 gallons of water per day. Agency officials are providing direction on possible actions. The FSA may assist with costs associated with drilling a well or buying trucked water. One farm has always been on village water and is not equipped to accept tankers of water, but another farm is aptly receiving trucked in water.

Ms. Ledoux reported that 135,000 gallons were pumped into the water tower to shut down the wells. Well one refilled to 20', but wells two and three remain dry. Time is of the essence with the impending winter. The Committee is coordinating their efforts with Village officials and the NYS Department of Health hydrologist to identify informed solutions.

In response to Chairman Tabolt, Ms. Ledoux stated that farms located outside the village have sufficient well water levels and no reported issue, but attributes the drought for insufficient Village well water. Mr. Pace stated that the Department of Health has been monitoring the wells and are convinced the drought is the leading cause. Ms. Ledoux cited the mounting costs for water at \$200 per tanker.

In response to Legislator King, Ms. Ledoux stated that one farmer has a well that has not been utilized, but plans to deepen it. Another farmer awaits the outcome with the Village's well No. 1. Also, the school is considering redirecting a water source that is currently pumped into the river.

County agency officials have also been testing corn silage and are encouraging farmers to be aware of their forage inventories. Ms. Ledoux predicts that milk prices may increase slightly by mid-2017.

Farmers are informed and encouraged to avail Farmnet counseling services. Ms. Ledoux assured the various agency officials are reaching out to farmers to discuss their issues and provide assistance.

In closing, she extended an invitation for the local Legislative farm tour on 10/5/16 and/or 10/8/16 encompassing diverse farming operations, and distributed a packet of agricultural information.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Legislator Richard Chartrand, Hospital Committee Chairman, reported receipt of IGT monies, of which the County must match 50% of the higher than expected amount.

RESOLUTION:

RESOLUTION NO. 377 - 2016
AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR 2016 SMALL CITIES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Introduced by Legislator Lawrence Dolhof, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee.

WHEREAS, the Board of Legislators has heretofore duly advertised and held a public hearing on the 6th day of September 2016 and has considered the comments presented thereat regarding housing and priority community development needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that

Section 1. The Board of Legislators hereby authorizes the filing of one or more 2016 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications to secure funding to assist low and moderate income households with the rehabilitation of owner occupied and renter occupied homes within Lewis County in an amount not to exceed \$850,000 and other such related activities as may be determined; and

Section 2. That the Chairman, or the Vice-Chairman, of the Board of Legislators, be and the same is hereby is authorized to make, execute, seal and deliver such applications, documents or writing as may be necessary to carry out the terms of this Resolution.

Section 3. That the within resolution shall take effect immediately.

Moved by Legislator Dolhof, seconded by Legislator King, and adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Snow Belt Housing Executive Director Cheryl Shenkle-O'Neill apologized for the oversight and thanked the Board for meeting and their approval of the \$847,500 CDBG application, to meet the submission deadline. The grant has an administrative limit of five percent.

Legislator Chartrand, upon Legislator Kulzer's approval as Solid Waste Committee Chairman, asked for discussion on the Village of Lowville's request to waive the tipping fee for de-sludge materials and to consider the Village's response to the Board's posed questions, a copy of which had recently been distributed.

Legislator Chartrand stated the entire project cost is \$1.4 million. Legislator Dolhof referenced a newspaper article that reported the Village's share of de-sludging at \$560,000 and having a \$850,000 reserve fund. He asked for clarification on who would benefit if the fees are waived.

Legislator Chartrand explained that waiving the \$15/Ton tipping fee would reduce project cost. Legislator Kulzer quoted estimated tipping fees of up to \$220,000 dependent upon sludge quantity. The sludge is reportedly drier than expected, thereby reducing the weight.

Legislator Chartrand opined if this was an economic development project the County would most surely waive the tipping fees for any business adding or retaining jobs. Certainly, the Kraft Heinz expansion impacts the economy and is worthy of County assistance. He surmised that if any business made a plea for help with a proposed venture with resulting new or retention of jobs, it would be favorably considered. Indeed, he said, the County has expended millions of dollars to support new or expanded businesses.

Legislator Dolhof asserted that if the Village is to retain the savings to bolster their reserve fund, he is not in favor of waiving the fees. However, if Kraft Heinz benefits by lower than anticipated project costs then he supports the measure. In response, Legislator Kulzer cited the Villages' written response as No. 2. within their letter, which indicates that Kraft will be the direct beneficiary.

Legislator Hathway relayed that Legislator Brennan had learned from Executive Director James Wright that DANC reduces their \$46/Ton fee to \$36 for municipal waste of this type. Accordingly, the Committee recommendation was to offer a 25% tip fee reduction to the Village, creating a precedent to offer a likewise reduction to municipalities in the future.

Legislator Kulzer asserted unknown facts at the time of the Solid Waste Committee meeting that have now been answered by the Village. By waiving the tip fees, the County would illustrate their support to Kraft Heinz of this project and for retention of the current and impending jobs.

Legislator Chartrand reported the Village is reviewing their water and sewer rates, the second lowest in the country, which are typically based on costs for operations, maintenance,

repairs and capital projects. Referencing statistics from 2010, he said that rates for a household of four in rural Upstate New York communities averaged \$600/year. The Village has assigned a committee to review and recommend rate restructuring effective 1/1/2017.

Legislator King expressed his support to waive the tipping fees, wanted assurance that all municipalities are treated likewise for future projects.

Liz Swearingin asked the Board to be cognizant of the impact on Solid Waste revenue when setting a precedent to waive tipping fees, and whether they would want to consider replenishing that budget in 2016 or subsequently. She reminded that trash volumes are decreasing, while recycling has increased. In relation to his budget, Legislator Hathway relayed Director Pete Wood's statement that he could handle a 25% tip fee reduction. Legislator Chartrand took exception, asserting the respective revenue was unknown during budget preparation

Legislator Kulzer also cited DANC's additional financial commitment to offset Lewis County's expenditures for advertising and community outreach efforts to increase recycling, and building renovations.

Legislator Kulzer agreed to sponsor a resolution to waive the tipping fees for the Village of Lowville sludge, for consideration by the Board at the next meeting.

There being no other business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned on motion by Legislator Dolhof at 1:03 p.m., seconded by Legislator Fawcett and carried.