

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Tyler at 7:00 p.m.

Members present on a roll call were:

Councilperson Brankman
Councilperson Kirkby
Councilperson Viens
Councilperson Morrison (excused)
Supervisor Tyler

Others present:

Dennie Westover, Highway Superintendent
Catherine L. Simmer, Town Clerk
Keven Severance
Tim Gay, Assessor

RESOLUTION #24
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Councilperson Viens seconded by Councilperson Kirkby, and approved on an all in favor vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the December 28, 2021 regular meeting as received.

RESOLUTION #25
APPROVAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

On a motion by Councilperson Viens seconded by Councilperson Kirkby, and approved on an all in favor vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the January 5, 2022 organizational meeting as received.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None present

YOUTH COMMISSSION: No new information to present.

**RESOLUTION #26
APPROVAL OF BILLS**

On a motion by Councilperson Kirkby, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved with a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize the payment of bills on Abstract #1 in the amount of \$248,292.67 for Vouchers 1-39, 44 and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED to authorize payment of bills on Abstract #2 in the amount of \$313,127.61 for Voucher 40-43.

DISCUSSION: Tim Gay is present to explain to the Board the Governor's Executive Order 11.1 referring to senior citizen exemptions. Under this Order the Town can automatically renew senior citizen exemptions for 2022 with a resolution. In 2021, the senior citizen exemption was automatic renewed at the state level, this year the law has been reinstated at the local level. Tim also explained how the increase in social security may affect these senior citizen exemptions and discussed possible solutions to the board. The board would like to maintain assistance for the towns seniors.

**RESOLUTION #27
SENIOR CITIZEN TAX EXEMPTION 2022**

On a motion by Councilperson Brankman, seconded by Councilperson Kirkby, and approved on an all in favor vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul issued Executive Order No. 11, declaring a State disaster emergency for the entire State of New York due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Governor Hochul issued Executive Order No. 11.1 on December 26, 2021, thereby extending Executive Order No. 11. This extension of the Governor's Executive Order modifies subdivision subdivisions 5, 5-a, 5-b, 5-c and 6 of section 467 of the Real Property Tax Law, the effect of which permits the governing body of an assessing unit (i.e., the Town Board of the Town of Westport) to adopt a Resolution directing the Assessor to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all property owners who received such exemption on the 2021 assessment roll (i.e., senior citizens), thereby dispensing with the need for such persons to file renewal applications to request such exemptions, and further dispensing with the requirement that assessors mail renewal applications to such persons; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 11.1 further allows the governing body of said assessing unit, in any such Resolution, at its option, to include procedures by which its Town Assessor may require a renewal application to be filed if he has reason to believe that an owner who qualified for the exemption on the 2021 assessment roll may have since changed his or her primary residence, added another owner to the deed, transferred the property to a new owner or died; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to said Executive Order, the Town Board of the Town of Westport wishes to adopt such Resolution directing the Town Assessor of the Town of Westport to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all eligible senior citizens, and granting the Town Assessor of the Town of Westport the authority to require renewal applications for due cause, as discussed above, utilizing procedures outlined below;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the authority granted by Executive Order No. 11.1, issued by the Governor of the State of New York, that the Town Board of the Town of Westport hereby directs the Town Assessor of the Town of Westport to:

1. Grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all individuals who received the senior exemption on the 2021 assessment roll, thereby dispensing with the need for any such individuals to file renewal applications for such exemptions, except that;
2. The Town Assessor may, in his sole discretion, require a renewal application to be timely filed with his office if he has reason to believe that any such individual, who qualified for the aforementioned exemption on the 2021 assessment roll, may have since changed their primary residence, added another owner to the deed for the relevant property, transferred such property to a new owner or died. If the Town Assessor requires such renewal application be filed, he shall notify the owner of the subject property of such requirement by regular mail, with such *notice* shall containing instructions on how to file the renewal application. Said renewal application may be returned by mail or by making an appointment to drop same off at the Town Assessor's office, 22 Champlain Avenue, Westport, NY 12993.

THE TOWN BOARD IS IN RECEIPT OF DECEMBER MONTHLY REPORTS FOR:

Westport Town Court
Westport Town Clerk's
Westport Town Supervisor Report

DISCUSSION: Discussion about the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the financial contributions to the merged Youth Commission programs. The Town of Lewis has a substantial balance in the program coffers. The memorandum will explain that over the next four years, the contributions of both Westport and Elizabethtown will equate to the Town of Lewis program balance.

RESOLUTION #28

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE CHAMPLAIN HUDSON POWER EXPRESS

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Kirkby, and approved on an all in favor vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to allow Supervisor Tyler to sign a letter of supporting the contract agreement between New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) to Honorable Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary to the New York State Public Service Commission.

RESOLUTION #29

RE-APPOINT NANCY DECKER TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW

On a motion by Councilperson Brankman, seconded by Councilperson Viens, and approved on an all in favor vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to re-appoint Nancy Decker to the Board of Assessment Review for a five-year term expiring September 30, 2026.

RESOLUTION #30

GENERAL FUND LOAN TO WADHAMS SEWER CAPITAL PROJECT

On a motion by Councilperson Kirkby, seconded by Councilperson Brankman, and approved on a roll call vote.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

RESOLVED to authorize a loan from the General Fund to Wadhams Sewer Capital Project Fund in the amount of \$209,403.71.

RESOLUTION #31

JUSTICE AUDIT

On a motion by Councilperson Viens, seconded by Councilperson Brankman, and approved with an all in favor.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

WHEREAS, the Westport Justice Court was audited on January 11, 2022 by Supervisor Tyler and Councilman Viens: and

BE IT RESOLVED that the records have been duly examined and fines therein collected have been turned over to the proper officials of the Town as required by law.

DPW SUPERINTENDANT REPORT: There is still a couple more days of log clearing. The wood boiler repairman never showed up to fix the boiler. Jason Keech was able to use the parts ordered along with a few additional parts to repair the boiler. He was able to save the Town money by doing this work. Keven has been learning the responsibilities of the highway superintendent.

SUPERVISOR TYLER COMMENT: Dudley has donated \$12,500.00 in lieu of taxes at the end of 2021.

**RESOLUTION #32
ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councilperson Kirkby, seconded by Councilperson Viens the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

4 Ayes Brankman, Kirkby, Viens, Tyler
0 Nays

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Catherine L. Simmer, Town Clerk