

Town of Throop
Town Board Meeting
January 17th, 2024

Board Members Present:

Supervisor Ridley
Councilman Ryan
Councilman Paczkowski
Councilman McNabb
Councilwoman Adams

Other Town Officials Present:

Attorney Chirco
Jay Moose / Codes
Kathy Magill / Clerk
Steve Helzer / planning

Other's Present:

Phil and Kelly Deacy, Mike and Sharon Jedra, Vern and Christine Stephens, Linda and Richard Jordan, Paul and Meghan Wilson, Walt Kolczynski, Fran Lasagna, Ed Ringmacher, Ashley Scoville, Steve and Coleen Young, Marcia Butler

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 beginning with the pledge of allegiance. The minutes of the December board meeting were reviewed for omissions or errors. Supervisor Ridley made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Councilman McNabb Seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The next Board Meeting was changed to February 28th, 2024, at 7:00pm.

The following reports were read:

Highway
Clerk
Codes and Zoning

Supervisor Ridley made a motion to accept the reports. Councilman Ryan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Ridley made a motion to pay the claims in the General Fund, Highway Fund, Water Fund and Water Extension Fund in the amount of \$152,047.47, \$2906.79, \$5119.85, \$1991.05 respectively. Councilman Paczkowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Ridley made a motion to enter into a Municipal agreement for 2023 and 24 with amendments to MCA with the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium. (see attached) Councilman McNabb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Ridley asked permission of the Town Board to allow him to break executive session privilege as it relates to the investigation regarding former Supervisor William Tarby at 7:27pm. Councilman Paczkowski made a motion to allow Supervisor Ridley to break privilege of executive session. Councilman McNabb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Ridley discussed the results of the New York State investigation, and subsequent guilty plea entered by William Tarby to the charges of Felony Larceny, and Official Misconduct that occurred against the Town of Throop while he was the Town Supervisor for 17 years.

Supervisor Ridley then presented the documents discovered that compelled him to contact law enforcement and were used to secure the felony conviction.

Councilman Paczkowski wanted the record to reflect that he (Councilman Paczkowski) asked for and was denied several times, reports regarding the Concession stand or haunted trail, and that Mr. Tarby made it clear the bookkeeper was not beholden to the Town Board, she was his bookkeeper and therefore did not answer to anyone but him.

He also wanted to state for the record, he would like to pursue whatever means possible to recover all stolen property, and or monies taken by Mr. Tarby.

Councilman McNabb also made the following statement,

Because he was arrested and found guilty in the court of law. A lot of things change when you see your signature on a check that didn't make it to Town Books. In good faith I paid over \$1000, which just in that one check, is Grand Larceny. Just by that one check that I gave to the Town for the pipe that I paid for, after moving into the Town...it is very eye opening. When you have a person that was trusted, who was elected, and reelected... that did what he did, you've got to do something about it, and since I took office over 2 years ago, Eric has stressed nothing but transparency for this Board, and this Town. Any one of you can stop in when the office is open on Saturday mornings, or during the week to look at what we are doing, or what Eric is doing. Eric is the CFO for the Town, and he is handling your money appropriately, and from what I can tell, since I've been here for 10 years, and been on the Board for 2, I don't think there is a Town in the area that is so open door, and so on point having the ability to sustain itself with investments and keeping an eye on how it's spent, I don't think it could be run any better. And that's kudos to Eric for taking this under his wing, and also Paul and Kathy for doing their due diligence to ensure that you the taxpayers are well represented. I don't think I could say anymore. And the fact that it's two years or three years that they took as a snapshot, I think we all know where this is going to end up.

The floor was then open for public comment or questions.

Ed Ringmacher asked if there was an estimate of how much money was taken.

Supervisor Ridley stated the State could prove \$18,000, from 2017-2020. The plea agreement was considerably less than what was proven.

He then asked if there were guidelines set up to prevent this from happening.

Councilman Ryan answered that it's hard to regulate, and he used the following example: the Town of Sennett Supervisor, and the Town of Throop Supervisor, made a legitimate agreement, that Throop is going to plow a portion of the Town of Sennett's roads, and the Town of Sennett is going to pay them the County rate for doing it. This went on for 15 years. The problem was... the Supervisor never went to the Town Board and let them know this agreement ever took place. The only reason this was discovered was because the Town Clerk filled in for the Clerk in Sennett, and Tom Gray, the Supervisor for the Town of Sennett asked when the invoice was going to be sent from the Town Supervisor, for the plow contract.

Supervisor Ridley added, the former Clerk and present Clerk were directed they were not to open mail that is directly addressed to the Town Supervisor. These conditions made it much easier to keep miscellaneous payments undetected.

Terri Kubarek asked how this happened without anyone's knowledge.

Supervisor Ridley explained there were accounts that were unknown to anyone other than the former Supervisor. The bookkeeper was unaware these accounts existed as was the Town Board. Mr. Tarby was able to deposit checks that were miscellaneous revenue, (for instance water taps, culvert pipes, the plow reimbursement check from the

Town of Sennett, etc.) then turn around and submit a cash withdrawal with his signature in the exact amount, instead of being deposited into the proper account.

Richard Jordan asked if this conviction would preclude Mr. Tarby from ever running for a public office again. Supervisor Ridley stated that was included in the terms of the plea agreement. Mr. Tarby cannot run for public office again.

Jennifer Ridley thanked everyone involved in the investigation for their sacrifices of time and their dedication to upholding the trust the taxpayers have in righting this wrong. She knows firsthand how much time her husband, the current Town Supervisor, spent during this entire process.

Lynn Cayward also expressed his gratitude for a job well done, and for allowing the constituents to feel heard. He stated he had never once had a question and not been welcomed with open arms and if the answer was unknown, there was a promise to find it.

The public forum was closed.

With no further business at hand,

Supervisor Ridley made a motion to adjourn at 8:42PM. Councilman McNabb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Ridley

Town Clerk

Paul Ryan

Donna Adams

Tom McNabb

Tom Paczkowski

