

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY**

JUNE 9, 2021

REGULAR MEETING

Supervisor Lyons led the Pledge of Allegiance and called the regular meeting to order at 7:03PM with the following members present: Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey. Town Clerk Clayton was also present.

Supervisor Lyons asked for a moment of silence for 4 town residents that passed away: Rodney Geel, Leo Bartell, Lois & Victor Porlier.

The minutes of 4/14/21 were reviewed; Councilmember Willsey had objections as to the content and minutes will submit his request for changes at the next board meeting. The minutes of 5/12/21 were reviewed and on motion of Supervisor Lyons and seconded by Councilmember Palow the minutes of 5/12/21 were accepted with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane. Councilmember Willsey abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Cheryl Baitsholts applying for DCO. Councilmember Willsey made a motion seconded by Councilmember Conklin to hire Cheryl Baitsholts as DCO. Motion failed with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons and Councilmembers Palow and Vane – nay. Councilmembers Conklin & Willsey – aye.

AUTHORIZING ADVERTISING AND PHONE INTERVIEWS FOR DCO

After discussion, Councilmember Willsey made a motion seconded by Supervisor Lyons to advertise again for DCO and schedule phone interviews on 6/28/21 and 6/29/21. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Willsey, aye. Councilmember Vane, nay.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- On July 14, 2021, the board meetings will return to open format.

HELDERBERG AMBULANCE – Members from the Helderberg Ambulance were in attendance and Alan Zuk presented a report which is attached to these minutes. Supervisor Lyons thanked all he volunteers.

KENNETH’S ARMY – Claire Ingalls was in attendance to discuss the upcoming fundraiser for Kenneth’s Army. A donation of \$100 was presented to the Helderberg Ambulance Squad. A full presentation will be given at the Town Board meeting on 7/14/21.

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DEPARTMENT REPORTS

HIGHWAY – Councilmember Palow presented Forms 284 and CHIPS information for paving the following roads: Elm Drive, Bush Drive, Suto Road, Cass Hill Road, Gulf Hill Road. There is approximately \$266,249.79 available from CHIPS. Highway Superintendent Bashwinger discussed the purchase of a Western Star transfer station roll off truck on State contract for approximately \$179,335 which will take one year to receive. Rental of a shoulder machine was also discussed.

PLANNING BOARD – Chairman Joe Martin was unable to attend the meeting but submitted the following report: Subdivision for Mr. & Mrs. Teets is under review. Lot Line adjustment for Mr. Winne & Mr. Scram is also being reviewed along with a preliminary subdivision for Mr. Scram. Issues concerning a previous subdivision that was not properly filed is under review.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Senior Lunch Program - now serving meals again. Please contact Karen Stark at 518-937-5963. Twenty-five meals were served on the first day.

Senior Shuttle – bus runs Mondays & Thursdays. If interested in riding please contact Amy at 518-473-6856 to schedule.

Celebration Committee - Councilmember Conklin stated that the committee Fort Days in Berne is scheduled at Switzkill Farm for 6/13; would like to schedule an event every other month.

Beautification Committee- Councilmember Conklin stated that trees are being planted and more volunteers are needed, along with volunteers to maintain flower boxes on Town of Berne signs. A thank you to Melissa Hanahan from Westerlo who donated plants to the Town.

Veteran Banners – banners will be up in time for Independence Day!

ACCEPTING CONTRACT WITH SANTORE’S FOR FIREWORK DISPLAY

Councilmember Palow made a motion seconded by Councilmember Conklin to enter into an agreement with Santore’s World Famous Fireworks, LLC, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for fireworks at the Town Park on 7/3/21. Motion carried with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey.

AUTHORIZING TOWN CLERK TO ADVERTISE FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Councilmember Palow made a motion seconded by Supervisor Lyons authorizing the Town Clerk to advertise fireworks display in the Altamont Enterprise. Motion carried with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey.

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OLD BUSINESS

APPRAISAL OF SWITZKILL FARM

Councilmember Vane stated that he has spoken to three reputable appraisers and will update board when appraisals are complete.

APPROVING DAVE HARNETT AS PART TIME TRANSFER STATION EMPLOYEE

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow approving THE HIRING OF Dave Harnett as a part-time permanent transfer station employee @ \$19 per hour for 16 hours per week, with accrual of vacation, FLSA non-exempt employee, unclassified, civil service exempt, effective 5/29/21. Motion carried with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey.

AUTHORIZING PUBLIC HEARING ON LL#3 HOME OCCUPATIONS

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow authorizing a public hearing to be held on LL#3 Home Occupations on July 14, 2021, at 6:30PM. Motion carried with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey.

NEW BUSINESS

AUTHORIZING SIGNING AGREEMENT FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF HIGHWAY MONEYS (284)

After discussion, Councilmember Vane made a motion seconded by Councilmember Conklin authorizing the signing of Agreement for the Expenditure of Highway Moneys (284) by Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane, Willsey & Highway Superintendent Bashwinger. Motion carried with the following roll call vote; Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey stated he cannot vote without seeing the paperwork.

APPROVING RENTAL OF SHOULDER MACHINE WITH MONROE TRACTOR

After discussion, Councilmember Palow made a motion seconded by Councilmember Vane approving the rental of a shoulder machine from Monroe Tractor for one week in an amount not to exceed \$3,525. Motion carried with the following roll call vote; Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey stated he cannot vote without seeing the paperwork.

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AUTHORIZING TOWN CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR CLAIMS AUDITING OFFICER

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Vane to authorize Town Clerk to advertise for a Claims Auditing Officer; 4-6 hours per month. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey voting nay.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND HANDBOOK - These documents are under review for updates.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD - James Dietz has completed his 6-month probationary period as highway employee.

SPEED SAFETY SIGNS – Councilmember Conklin discussed the need for traffic/digital signs in the Hamlet.

AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR TOWN PARK BASEBALL FIELDS

Supervisor Lyons stated that field renovations for the baseball field totaled \$10,000 and the Town had budgeted \$4,000 and after discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Palow to cover expenses in an amount not to exceed \$4,000. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey voting aye.

ACCEPTING SUPERVISOR’S MONTHLY REPORTS FOR MAY

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to accept the Supervisor’s May monthly reports. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey abstained.

ACCEPTING TOWN CLERK’S MONTHLY REPORT FOR MAY

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to accept the Town Clerk’s May monthly report. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey voting aye.

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ACCEPTING BUILDING & ZONING MONTHLY REPORT FOR MAY

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to accept the Building & Zoning’s May monthly report. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey voting aye.

AUTHORIZING BUDGET TRANSFERS FOR MAY

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow that the budget transfers for May be authorized. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey abstained.

APPROVING ABSTRACTS

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to approve the following abstracts:

GENERAL FUND, HIGHWAY FUND, SEWER, UTILITIES, WITHOLDINGS FOR 2021.....	\$ 106,779.72
Abstract #37 of 2021.....	\$ 11,326.07
Abstract #38 of 2021.....	\$ 241.78
Abstract #39 of 2021.....	\$ 11,107.48
Abstract #40 of 2021.....	\$ 249.16
Abstract #41 of 2021.....	\$ 13,976.24
Abstract #42 of 2021.....	\$ 2,995.81
Abstract #43 of 2021.....	\$ 9,625.55
Abstract #36 of 2021.....	\$ 57,257.63

Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey voted nay.

APPROVING MONTHLY PAYMENT OF BILLS

After discussion, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to approve the payment of the monthly bills. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Conklin & Vane voting aye. Councilmember Willsey voted nay.

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AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF AIR CONDITIONER UNITS FOR BERNE COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CENTER

After discussion, Councilmember Palow made a motion seconded by Supervisor Lyons to purchase four air conditioner units from Home Depot in an amount not to exceed \$3,000. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey voting aye.

Councilmember Willsey asked Supervisor Lyons to discuss what preliminary projects are being worked on.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business or discussion, Supervisor Lyons made the motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Supervisor Lyons, and Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Vane & Willsey voting aye. Meeting adjourned at 9:19PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita C. Clayton, Town Clerk

Town of Berne			
Sewer Fund Budget Transfers			
5/31/2021		To	From
SS -18-8110-0000-44036	TELEPHONE	\$ 179.00	
SS -18-8110-0000-44070	EQUIPMENT REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE	\$ 25.00	
SS -18-8110-0000-44071	PROPERTY REPAIR AND RENTAL		\$ 204.00
		\$ 204.00	\$ 204.00

Town of Berne			
Budget Transfers			
5/31/2021		To	From
DA -15-5110-0000-44028	SAFETY SUPPLIES	\$ 150.00	
DA -15-5110-0000-44999	MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES		\$ 150.00
DA -11-5120-0000-44046	FEES FOR SERVICES		\$ 1,042.00
DA -15-5130-001 -44070	EQUIPMENT REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE	\$ 1,042.00	
DA -11-5130-0000-44070	EQUIPMENT REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE		\$ 5,755.00
DA -11-5130-0000-44072	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	\$ 5,755.00	
		\$ 6,947.00	\$ 6,947.00

Budget Transfers			
General Fund			
5/31/2021		To	From
A -11-1110-0000-44036	TELEPHONE	\$ 386.00	
A -11-1620-0000-44028	SAFETY SUPPLIES	\$ 320.00	
A -11-1620-0000-44036	TELEPHONE	\$ 633.00	
A -11-1620-0000-44041	COMPUTER FEES	\$ 750.00	
A -11-1910-0000-44999	MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES	\$ 780.00	
A -11-1990-0000-44999	MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES		\$ 2,869.00
A -17-7110-0000-44106	SEWER CHARGES		\$ 299.00
A -17-7110-0000-44999	MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES	\$ 299.00	
A -17-7550-0000-44020	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 84.00	
A -17-7550-0000-44999	MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES		\$ 84.00
		\$ 3,252.00	\$ 3,252.00

Helderberg Ambulance

Presentation to the Knox Town Board on June 8, 2021

and

Berne Town Board on June 9, 2021

Introduction of Helderberg Ambulance members

A report by members of Helderberg Ambulance Squad was completed to evaluate the short and long term viability of the ambulance squad.

The report included:

1. Our active membership has grown over the past six years and the average number of years of experience of Helderberg members is greater than any other BLS agency in the region. As was demonstrated most recently at the Hilltop Lane explosion, we were able to maintain and field three fully equipped and staffed ambulances simultaneously. Typically we deploy two ambulances simultaneously five times a month and three ambulances simultaneously eight times a year. Helderberg is rarely the recipient of mutual aid. Instead we are a provider of mutual aid to our neighbors. In 2020 the ambulance squad covered for Albany County ~~28~~²⁵ times. So far this year the squad has covered 18 times for Albany County.
2. A polling of the membership of Helderberg Ambulance was conducted to determine the desire to continue indefinitely, but advancing age and health concerns were an issue. The membership also indicated that aging out of members and replacement of those individuals is a concern for the future. The recommendation of the membership was to conduct a more aggressive recruitment effort.
3. The committee interviewed professionals within the EMS community. The committee interviewed John Politis, who is an ACSO Paramedic and former Captain of Colonie EMS, Howard Huth, Director of SUNY Cobleskill Paramedic Program and former Captain of Western Turnpike EMS, and Deborah Mackey, former executive director of Westerlo Ambulance Squad. The committee also interviewed members from the Town of Guilderland EMS, Bethlehem/Delmar EMS, Altamont Rescue, Ravena Rescue, and Duanesburg Ambulance Squad. Howard Huth and John Politis applauded Helderberg Ambulance Squad's performance to date, but are skeptical that the level of service that Helderberg Ambulance is currently providing is sustainable. The primary concern is a

lack of adequate manpower and failing to counteract membership turnover resulting in a death spiral of the organization.

4. The report included a summary of statistics from the activity of Helderberg Ambulance Squad over the past several years. The statistics include the number of calls, the age of responding members for those calls, and the trends that those statistics indicate. Charts 4, 5, and 10
5. The committee evaluated the financial strength of the organization. At this time the squad is financially stable and barring unanticipated expenditures the financial position is a strength of the organization.
6. The committee identified organizations which were successful in meeting manpower shortages by contracting for staffing from individuals outside the organization. These organizations include: Bethlehem/Delmar, Altamont Rescue, and Duanesburg Rescue. The towns of Westerlo, Rensselaerville, and the Village of Voorheesville met the manpower shortage by contracting with the Albany County Sherriff's Department.
7. It is the intention of Helderberg Ambulance Squad to continue operation for as long as possible, but a significant injury or illness to one of the primary responders could result in more turnovers. In the long term more turnovers may result in higher costs for both the Town of Knox and the Town of Berne to provide emergency medical services to the residents. Currently the squad is planning on starting an aggressive recruitment program to increase membership. Helderberg Ambulance would like to partner with the leaders of the Town of Knox and the Town of Berne in this effort.
8. Helderberg Ambulance Squad provides the equivalent of five full time employees to our community in unpaid volunteer labor. An important factor to be considered in the local knowledge and local relationships which our members bring to the community. Recently the squad began to send customer surveys to individuals transported by the squad. Nearly 50% of the surveys were returned, and all of the surveys rate our care very highly.

CHART 4

ANNUAL TOP FIVE RESPONDERS /REST OF SQUAD
2015-2020

NOTE: Calculates responses by Top Five Responders (TFR) for each calendar year and compares those to responses by Rest of Squad (ROS)

Year	TFR/ROS	TFR %/ROS %
2015	498/1197	41.6% 58.4%
2016	645/1125	57.3% 42.7%
2017	666/988	66.7% 33.3%
2018	502/993	50.5% 49.5%
2019	658/1150	57.2% 42.8%
2020	775/1208	64.1% 33.9%

CHART 5

AVERAGE AGE OF TOP FIVE RESPONDERS BY YEAR

Year	Average Age
2015	70.8
2016	65.2
2017	67.4
2018	68.4
2019	69.8
2020	71.0

CHART 10
TYPES OF CALLS

2016-2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
All Calls	425	434	396	412	470
Transports	241/56%	237/55%	214/54%	261/63%	263/56%
BLS Transports	97/23%	94/22%	78/20%	106/26%	99/21%
Mutual Aid	24	8	5	5	17
Standby	21	13	18	23	75
Turnover	22	64	62	14	5

NOTE: Standbys have increased almost 600% since 2017; turnovers are down about 1200%. Mutual Aid calls have doubled during the same period.