

Town of Diana Special Board Meeting with Public Hearing (Updated Bond Resolution for Capital Water Project) to Follow - November 01, 2023- 6:00 pm

Date: 11/01/2023

Call meeting to order:

Supervisor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM

Roll Call:

Supervisor Smith: Here
Councilman Taylor: Here
Councilman Bango: Here
Councilman Malbeuf: Here
Councilman Pierce: Here
All present. None Excused.

The privilege of the floor to the public: (A motion to limit debate could be in order)

Kelly Ritz - Mrs. Ritz stated she went door to door to residents asking them what issues they had that they would like to bring before the board. She stated the biggest issue most had was wanting to know what is going to happen with the Farmer's Market and if there would be one next year, and where. Supervisor Smith informed Mrs. Ritz that the board votes on the Farmer's Market every spring, and would again this spring. They are looking for alternate locations for the market. Mrs. Ritz stated the other issue many had was with the hamlet services of leaves and brush pick up and snowblowing of sidewalks in the Hamlet. She stated some didn't want it and some did. There were questions as to why it is not offered town wide, and is only offered in the hamlet. Supervisor Smith and fellow board members explained that these services were part of the dissolution agreement, when the Village of Harrisville was dissolved and became a Hamlet. There were two committees that decided these services would continue in the Hamlet after the dissolution as these services are paid for each year by funds from the dissolution, to be provided in the Hamlet only, as per the dissolution agreement. Mrs. Kelly thanked the board and Supervisor Smith for their time.

Update on Harrisville Health Center - Talks with Lewis County Hospital

Supervisor Smith updated all present on the Harrisville Medical Center. He stated that in prior years, the hospital paid the town rent up to \$10,000.00 per year. Lewis County Hospital doesn't want to pay rent if they return because they will have to recruit and pay a Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner to be here. They informed Supervisor Smith it is very unlikely they will be able to get a Doctor to come to our medical center. Supervisor Smith further explained the Hospital will be responsible for all utilities and upkeep in the building. They want the town to plow and mow, and be responsible for upkeep on the outside of the building. Board members all voiced concerns about the loss of revenue for the town, approximately \$10,000 a year in lost rent for the building. IF they don't pay rent that cost would be put on the taxpayers. Supervisor Smith stated the hospital wants the county to buy the building for \$1.00 and if they were to leave the building would be sold back to the town for \$1.00. The town will lose that 10,000 a year in revenue and have to pay to plow the parking lot and mow the yard. Supervisor Smith stated that Lowville Hospital wants to control the operations without board interference. Lewis County Representative Phil Hathway stated if the county owns the building, the county will pay for the plowing, so the town would be paid to plow. The mowing, he said if that becomes an issue, the county can work on that. Representative Hathway feels the \$400 or \$500 cost for that shouldn't be a deal breaker. The driver is paid based on the square footage that is being plowed, He is not sure what the amount of payment would be. The medical building is tax exempt. Supervisor Smith agreed and let all know they are talking daily with the Lewis County Hospital attorney, our town attorney, and negotiations are still ongoing. He stated the hospital wants a ten year contract without paying rent. The town has paid for and completed renovations on the inside of the building and it is up to code. He stated that during the contract the town can serve notice if they do not want them there anymore, and vice versa, if the hospital wants to pull out. If that were to happen, again, the building would be sold back to the town for \$1.00. The hospital said they would be out approximately \$110,000 to bring in a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's assistant, and over \$200,000 if they were to bring in a Doctor. This is why they have said, they won't be bringing in a Doctor, and why they don't want to pay rent. Supervisor Smith

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stated that he and the board wanted to get the information out to the community, there will be no vote on this tonight, and negotiations will continue.

All agree it would be nice to have medical back in the town. Councilman Taylor stated he would vote no to no rent, and is hoping they will be able to come to an agreement and get medical back in town. Councilman Taylor asked Representative Hathway if there was any grant money that could be applied for to reimburse the town for the loss of rent revenue to get medical back into our building in town. Representative Hathway stated that was a great question and he would look into it.

Hamlet Services - Leaf Pick up & Snowblowing of sidewalks

Supervisor Smith stated he did some research and went back through the dissolution study, and found that the services all wanted to keep if the village was dissolved were: leaf pick up, snow blowing, and community fest. A few years later the fire department took over the community fest. Supervisor Smith explained again that the town gets money from the state, dissolution funds, to do these services. The town doesn't get state money for doing the whole town of Diana. The business district and the Hamlet are all that covers and he feels we must keep the Hamlet and Business District in the Hamlet in the best condition to draw people in. He explained again that it was part of the two committees during the dissolution of the village of Harrisville and the committees decided what services should be kept and that is why it is still being done by the town, after the village of Harrisville was dissolved. The dump for green waste is available to all to use. Snowblowing in the village/hamlet. It was part of the dissolution so that is why it is still being done, and will continue to be done.

Updated tentative budget:

Board members looked over the updates on hand out from Supervisor Smith. He stated to all present that they stayed under our tax cap, which is good. General discussion about the updates. Supervisor Smith stated he is hoping to have a final budget to the board members by the middle of next week before the public hearing. Supervisor Smith let all present know that \$4000 is budgeted to do the brush and leaf pickup that comes from the dissolution funds the town gets each year. Same for the snowblowing of the sidewalks, there is money the town gets from the dissolution funds from the state. At the budget hearing after the meeting on November 14, 2023, they will go into more detail. Supervisor Smith stated that so far the budget is looking good, and it looks like residents will be seeing their property taxes going down a little.

BCA Kimballs Bridge Study: Supervisor Smith stated that Bernier and Carr sent the official study for the Kimballs mills bridge for members to look over. General Discussion on the study.

Councilman /Town Clerk / Bookkeeper time:

Nothing to report.

Supervisor Smith asked if there were any questions. There were none. Supervisor Smith asked for a motion to adjourn the board meeting.

Motion to adjourn by: Councilman Pierce

Seconded by: Councilman Bango

Aye all in favor: Aye

None Opposed

Motion Carried

Board meeting adjourned at: 6:37 pm

Supervisor Smith stated they would now move onto the Public Hearing for the adoption of a Supplemental Bond, amending resolution #12-2021, increasing the bond by \$6,000,000, due to the rising costs of materials/labor to complete the water project.

Supervisor Smith called the Public Hearing to order at: 6:39 pm.

Roll Call:

Supervisor Smith: Here

Councilman Taylor: Here

Councilman Bango: Here

Councilman Malbeuf: Here

Councilman Pierce: Here

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All present/None Excused

Supervisor Smith explained to all the original resolution was Resolution #12-2021 for \$3,900,000. He explained that the board voted in favor of it, but with the cost of materials on the rise, the new estimate from engineers was an increase of \$2,550,000, tonight we will be asking for an even 6 million bond for the purpose of the water district. The new resolution will put us into a better funding pool to go back to USDA to get more funding, and this will trigger us being able to apply for other funding. Supervisor Smith further explained this doesn't mean we will be borrowing that full amount, it just allows us to be able to go for more funding and not have to use as much taxpayer money. Supervisor Smith stated that the public hearing had to remain in session for the full 30 minutes before they could vote. He stated they would first rescind resolution #5-2023 and then vote for the updated bond resolution. He asked if there were any questions while they waited for the votes at 7:09 pm. General Discussion about the water project and other topics from the meeting.

At 7:09 PM Supervisor Smith called for a motion to rescind resolution #5-2023.

Motion to Rescind by: Councilman Taylor

Seconded by: Council Malbeuf

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Smith: Aye
Councilman Pierce: Aye
Councilman Taylor: Aye
Councilman Bango: Aye
Councilman Malbeuf: Aye

All in Favor: Aye

None Opposed. Motion Carried.

Supervisor Smith called for a motion to amend Resolutions #12-2021 bringing the bond from \$3,900,000.00 to \$6,000,000.00.

Motioned to Amend by: Councilman Taylor

Seconded by: Councilman Bango

Supervisor Smith opened the floor for any questions before the board voted. No questions.

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Smith: Aye
Councilman Pierce: Aye
Councilman Taylor: Aye
Councilman Bango: Aye
Councilman Malbeuf: Aye

All in favor: Aye

None opposed. Motion carried.

Supervisor Smith asked if there were any other questions. There were none. Supervisor Smith asked for a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing.

Motion to adjourn by: Councilman Pierce

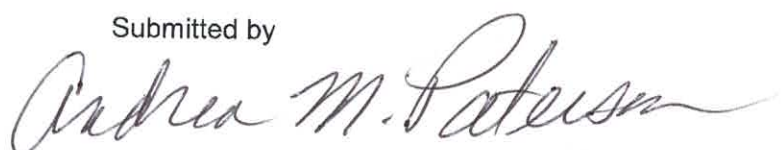
Seconded by: Councilman Malbeuf

All in favor: Aye

None opposed. Motion carried.

Public Hearing Adjourned at: 7:13 PM

Submitted by



Andrea M. Paterson
Town of Diana Clerk