

## Regular Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Ephratah Town Board was held at 6 PM on Wednesday, December 11th, 2024 at the Ephratah Town Hall. Roll call found the following members present:

Supervisor	Todd Bradt
Councilman	Andrew Chorlton
Councilwoman	Eleanor Smith
Councilman	George Cosselman
Councilwoman	Paula Keppler
Clerk	Cynthia Wesselmann
Highway Superintendent	John Polenski Jr.
Code Enforcement Officer	Devon Percival - absent
Attorney	Michael Albanese

The meeting was opened with Salute to the Flag, led by Supervisor Todd Bradt.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the regular meeting on November 13th, 2024. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrew Chorlton. 5 ayes, carried.

George Cosselman made a motion to pay General bills, Abstract #12, claim 516 thru 532 in the amount of \$10,543.30. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrew Chorlton. 5 Ayes, carried.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to pay Highway bills, Abstract #12, claim 533 thru 551 in the amount of \$36,173.04. 2<sup>nd</sup> by George Cosselman. 5 ayes, carried.

### **Communications:**

- Christmas and New Year's holidays will not affect the transfer station hours. They will be open regular hours.
- The New York State DOT has received the requests for the speed limit changes and have agreed to do a study to see if these will be appropriate. The town will be notified when the studies are completed.
- The Ephratah Recreation Commission Calendar of Events for 2025 has been posted.

### **Public Input:**

- None

### **Reports:**

#### Code Enforcement Officer:

- Mr. Percival made a request that Mr. Albanese be in attendance for an upcoming court case.

#### Planning Board:

- Mr. Simpson will be at the next meeting to discuss the Dollar General plans.

#### Highway

- Highway Superintendent, John Polenski Jr. said that the crews were keeping up with the snow removal. He talked to the board about changing the Local Law Number 3 of 2009 Right of Way on Highway Roads to include and change Section 1-2: No shrubs, rocks, fences, vehicles, recreational vehicles, trailers, or any other impediments within twenty-five (25) feet from the centerline of any

road located in the Town of Ephratah.

- Mr. Polenski Jr recouped monies from Century Linens in the amount of \$240.89 credit.
- The Highway Superintendent would like to purchase a 2024 Ford Maverick truck for \$28,480.00 from Brown's Ford in Johnstown.
- A bay door needs to be replaced. Colonial Overhead Door can replace the door for \$3,485.00.

#### Youth:

- Nothing at this time.

#### Assessor:

- The Assessor Lyn Yuenger said AG renewals are due by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. The new AG rules have a 10 year exemption. Property owners can apply on-line by March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The Assessor noted that there are exemption forms available for any new Agriculture structures to be filled out before March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- Anyone who has done any building or demolition needs to call or come in to the office to inform the Assessor, with their permit, in order to update the property assessment. Also available are the forms for anyone turning 65 before 12/31/25 for the Enhanced Star exemption and Senior Star exemption if your income is under the limit. The income ceiling has gone up and applications can be picked at the Assessor's office.
- Property owners can apply for the Basic Star exemption on-line at [www.tax.ny.gov/star](http://www.tax.ny.gov/star) from September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 through March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. You would need your social security number and property tax ID.
- Any questions or concerns, they are available on Tuesday evenings from 6-8 pm at the Town, or call the Assessor's Office at (518) 762-5688.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to set the Public Hearing to amend the Local Law 3 of 2009 Right of Use on Highway Roads to be held January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6:15 pm, Ephratah Town Hall. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrew Chorlton. 5 ayes, carried.

#### Supervisor:

- The Supervisor's financial report was submitted and is on file for review.

#### Historian:

- Abby Cretser is working on the annual report.

#### New Business:

##### **Resolution 87**

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to accept Resolution 87 to contract with the James Brennan Humane Society for 2025 in the amount of \$1,875.00. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to set the Organizational Meeting for January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, 9 am, at the Ephratah Town Hall. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrew Chorlton. 5 ayes, carried.

#### Old Business:

- The Town is in the process of completing the standard workday as required by the New York State retirement system.

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel and Litigation. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried. 6:37 PM

Eleanor Smith made a motion to come out of Executive Session. George Cosselman 2<sup>nd</sup>. 5ayes, carried. 6:55PM

### **Resolution 88**

Andrew Chorlton made a motion to accept Resolution 88 to contract with Whittaker Appraisal Group for two appraisals for \$500 each regarding the Bennett vs Town of Ephratah. If needed to testify, the fee will be \$125.00/hour. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paula Keppler. 5 ayes, carried.

### **Resolution 89**

George Cosselman made a motion to accept Resolution 89 to cover the health insurance of elected official John Polenski Jr. and family, with a cost of 10% to them, contingent on him continuing to run for the elected position and/or reaches the minimum age of 55 years of age with 20 years of service. Upon retirement, Mr. Polenski Jr. agrees to relinquish the life time health insurance and agrees to pay the cost of 10% for his policy. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eleanor Smith. 5 ayes, carried.

### **Public Input**

- Nicholas Gillen of State Hwy 67 in Ephratah, wanted to make the town aware of a potential problem for the fire departments involving a resident on New Turnpike Road for unlawful burning.
- Jack Keppler of County Highway 119 in Ephratah, inquired if any more thoughts had been given to combining the fire departments.

Eleanor Smith made a motion to adjourn the town board meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paula Keppler. 5 Ayes, carried. Time 7:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Wesselmann  
Town Clerk, Town of Ephratah