

AGENDA
TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE, COUNTY OF GREENE
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

JUNE 10, 2024

Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices.

Pledge of Allegiance

Presentation by Rene VanSchaack from Greene County IDA

Public Comment Period

New Business

- Resolution to Approve Purchase from I.T.S. for Technology Upgrade
- Audit of Claims

Upcoming Meetings

- June 13, 2024 Planning Board Meeting at 7 PM
- June 19, 2024 Public Information Meeting with Mary Beth Bianconi from Delaware Engineering and Residents of Water District 2 at 6:30 PM at Town Hall
- June 24, 2024 Town Board Work Meeting at 7 PM
- July 28, 2024 Veterans Committee Picnic at 12 Noon at Cecil Hallock Park, Rain Location at Cornell Hook & Ladder Fire Company on Gill Road
- September 5, 2024 Senior Picnic at 12 PM at Cecil Hallock Park
- September 21, 2024 Townwide Yard Sale Beginning at 9 AM
- October 5, 2024 Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinic at Town Hall, Pre-Registration Required at jkash@townofnewbaltimore.org

Public Comment Period/Community Events

Adjournment

****** Agenda Subject to Change******

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC CONDUCT DURING TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

1. The Supervisor shall preside at the meetings of the Town Board. In the absence of the Supervisor, the Deputy Supervisor shall be the acting Supervisor. In the event both the Supervisor and the Deputy Supervisor are absent, the other members shall designate one of their members to act as temporary chairman. A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may adjourn.
2. Town residents who wish to speak shall fill out a card at the entrance of the meeting room listing their name, contact information, and the subject matter in which they would like to speak. These cards will be collected prior to the beginning of the Town Board meeting and given to the Town Supervisor or Deputy Supervisor in the absence of the Supervisor.
3. Speakers must be recognized by the presiding officer and then proceed to the lectern and state their name and address. They must limit their remarks on official town business to up to three minutes on a given topic and may not yield any remaining time to another speaker. They must address their remarks to the Board as a body and not to any member thereof and not to other members of the audience in the form of a debate.
4. Speakers should present their remarks in a courteous manner and may not make disparaging remarks or personal comments about public officials, town residents, or others. All speakers will observe the commonly accepted rules of courtesy, decorum, dignity, and good taste with no cursing, swearing, clapping, booing, finger pointing, bullying, whispering, or talking that disrupts the proceedings of the business of the Town Board.
5. Any speaker who disregards the directives of the presiding officer in enforcing the rules, disturbs the peace at a meeting, makes impertinent or slanderous remarks, or generally conducts themselves in an inappropriate manner shall be barred from further participation and will forfeit any balance of time remaining for their comments.
6. After a final warning, if a speaker willfully refuses to step down, the Town Supervisor shall contact the appropriate authorities to remove the speaker from the meeting room and to restore order.
7. The Town Supervisor, or in their absence the Deputy Supervisor, shall ensure compliance with these rules.

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COUNTY OF GREENE **Adopted 7/8/2024**
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Supervisor Ruso opened the meeting at 7:00 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Also attending Councilmembers Downes, Kash, Sottolano, and VanEtten; Michelle Storm, Esq.; Deputy Supervisor Dellisanti; Deputy Town Clerk Eldred; and 12 members of the public who signed the attendance book. Absent: Town Clerk Finke and Highway Superintendent VanWormer

Presentation by Rene VanSchaack from Greene County IDA

Rene VanSchaack: Anyway, Good Evening. For those who don't know me already, my name's Rene VanSchaack, I just want to be upfront. You probably know I retired from the IDA as Executive Director a few years ago and they convinced me part of the deal to get out was I would stick around for a few years and help wrap up some of these long-term projects that they had started. So one of them, that's what I'm here to talk to you about tonight, and this is the first step. You're probably aware the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) is going through. You probably see you can't miss it with all the Kiewit trucks and everybody flying around Town here right now. When we did that project in 2022 I think it was or 2023, I'm sorry obviously one of the things that we analyzed with that is impacts like we do every project. Of course the IDA right, wrong, or indifferent – some days we're the good guys, some day we're the bad guys – but I like to think we really do spend a lot of time and we did an in-depth fundings statement on that which is online if anybody ever wants to go and look at that which lays everything out. So one of the things that this project we noted is clearly it's not gonna provide any long-term employment, we know it's not gonna play that. That was a criticism at the public hearings and it would be stupid to not acknowledge that. But secondarily it's not gonna result also in any long-term secondary spending or indirect spending in the community and what I started doing when I took over the IDA is we started to track what the businesses that we had PILOTS with spend in the community every year. It wasn't one of our metrics they were required, you know they met their jobs whatever, and it was pretty astounding because these warehouses spend anywhere from \$150,000 to \$250,000 even more depending on remodeling stuff a year in the local communities – snow plowing and all kinds of other events that go on. So we realized this project won't have that benefit okay, they didn't have a long-term future. So one of the things we did is we came up with this idea of establishing, we call it a community hosts fee, I regret that now, it should have been called like a economic development fee. Long story short is we realized that future economic growth around here was severely limited by the lack of ability to invest in infrastructure. We get it. The small towns and stuff and as those that we know we built the first business parks here. The IDA paid for all that infrastructure. But what people don't realize is the first business park, 46% of it was paid for by state grants. The second business park we were down to about a 38% ratio. By the time we did Ferguson down there it was a zip, zero, nada ratio and now anybody who works for the State who's familiar with funding knows they know it's a rat-race and you're lucky if you get it. So the model that we had in the past of the IDA being able to completely fund these infrastructure investments that are necessary to support economic development – no water, no sewer, no you know without that -- nobody builds by himself, we all acknowledge that. So what we did is we established a fund based on the mileage of the line through each community just like the PILOT was separated, about the only way you could fairly do it, took it out to a few decimal places even, and we established this fund to be paid out over a 30-year term on top of the PILOT. So in your guys' case, when we did the analysis on this project, now at that time the assumption was that they were gonna stay wholly within the CSX right-of-way but as we know now they have deviated a little bit here or there, but for the most part they're on CSX right-of-way or they're out on I call it junk land, but they're not going through any prime development or high value lands okay. So anyway CSX paid you that year \$9,895, that was CSX payments to the Town of New Baltimore for the entire length of the line through the Town. The PILOT from CHPE on top of that is now gonna pay you \$64,747 the first year and then it goes up – don't hold me to this, I wanna say a percent and a half each year for the 30 years. A point and a half.

Supervisor Ruso: Alright. No, I think it's a point and a half.

Rene VanSchaack: Yeah, I think it's a point and a half. I never liked to settle for a point and two's a squeeze in this economy. So under this Environmental Development Fund though in the first year New Baltimore's targeted to receive \$202,987 okay so what's that, almost quadruple your PILOT payment alone and over the total life of thirty years you're gonna get

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just over \$9.8 million. Now the caveat is that we set this up to mitigate. this is a mitigation fund, mitigation meaning you have an impact here or a lack of an impact and you come up with a solution to somehow solve that impact or offset that impact okay. And so one of the caveats that's in there was in the Findings Statement that was distributed to everybody is the money could not be used to just stick in the budget and lower the general tax levy. It's meant to make investments for the future for economic development. I'm going to be quite frank with you, this is really in a way an experiment. I'm not familiar, the way we structured this I haven't seen yet myself. If this works the way I envisioned it and I know Jeff and I have talked, I mean you clearly have some needs for infrastructure here that would support economic development, it's a no-brainer. If this all works out well over the next 10, 15, 20-plus years, you know it would be a model that the IDA could use again in other instances as a way to continue this effort. Now you know I guess the IDA could have in the end of the day said 'well, we're just gonna since we developed this (unable to understand) take the fund' I felt it was really important to put the fund in the communities' hands and the community partner with so I would also say at the end of the day the IDA will make some final decisions on what they fund or they don't fund, but I can tell you the discussion and the intent when I did this was that if it was priorities that we both share to get to, you know we could jointly fund things so we're not saying to the towns 'you just fund everything' saying we can partner up on some things as well. Process-wise, we're taking this first initial meeting to just come introduce, make sure everybody aware of what's going on, introduce myself, have just a general discussion about it. Process-wise after this I will ask each municipality to appoint two people to be a liaison. So what'll happen after I make the round of all the meetings, I will individually informally kind of circle to the two liaisons and have a conversation, the goal would be later in the summer to have a sit down and look at draft guidelines that I'll present to the IDA board and their consultant for their review and approval. So, of course, everybody says it's gonna be crazy, but I'm very confident that we can get seven municipalities and everybody on the right page moving forward on this. So again we're working on a category, some things I see off the top of my head that would be eligible for the fund would be things like if a town wanted to develop an economic development plan and just really identify the areas up front where they wanted to focus on. Okay, that's smart planning, smart development. Studies, engineering studies to get analysis going of what it would cost. Those would all be it. And then, of course, the design, engineering and otherwise. This money would very much be bondable, the source of the money. I'd also note that it is a condition of the IDA's total incentive package such that if there comes a year that they don't make the payment, they're potential subject to penalty as not only the loss of future IDA benefits but a fallback of all the tax savings in the past. So while no offense. Town Attorney sends a few letters. Basically the IDA gets store's handling in this deal because they have a very big negative incentive than not. I have no doubt the company will make the payments on that. And then again we'll come up with guidelines and then the money doesn't start to get paid until 2026. So I'll make a recommendation to you guys is that as you're putting your budget together at the end of this year, I would recommend that you contact April at the IDA and have a conversation as to whether they would jointly fund an immediate, something that the Town could put a little money into within your budget needs, they could put some money in and let's start moving because I think we know where the projects are gonna be and so if you could get a headstart in '25 with getting some of the preliminary, I don't say the engineering, but just sorting out the routes and right-of-ways and easements, there's a lot of preplanning work goes in. You might want to consider positioning yourself for that next year okay, but we can have a conversation on that later. So I guess for a minute I'll shut up which is unusual and see if anybody has any questions or comments or...

Councilmember Downes: Renee, how long are you gonna be sticking around?

Renee VanSchaack: As long as my mental health allows. I don't plan on going...

Councilmember Downes: I mean I didn't know if you were looking to get this just up and running and then...

Renee VanSchaack: No, as long as they'll have me too. We've got some stuff that's gonna be going 18 months to two years. There's some other big planning initiatives we have with the power plant. I put a bunch of cold stuff in place right before I retired but now I gotta kind of help finish it up too. I figure I'll be around for a little while longer.

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Supervisor Ruso: Not the whole 30 years.

Renee VanSchaack: Not the whole 30 years, I trust you, but I do want them to solve the Athens problem with the power plant constantly needing a PILOT in 20 years because I figure I'd be like 86 and I do not want to be at Stewart's hearing about how the IDA did this because you know this is Greene County. I'll be 86 and people will still and even if it involves the IDA they'll still, you know, Renee... I'll be blamed for it.

Councilmember VanEtten: You said April was the contact person.

Renee VanSchaack: Yes, April is the Executive Director now. She took over for me and very, very bright, very competent and I'm just like I said I really don't do policy stuff for them anymore. I'm just mainly doing the technical stuff.

Supervisor Ruso: Well, in our conversations you and I have had not just immediately past but in the last year and so forth, economic development seems to be the primary focus and some of these things I worry about well the commercial district is on 9W. There are still residential properties around that so we have to be very concerned about those folks who do live along those routes.

Renee VanSchaack: Well, that's why I say I think maybe at some point you might want to think about using a little bit of the funding up front just to do sort of an economic development plan and just take a little bit of time and look at parcels. I mean clearly it's a no-brainer to come north and try to get up and service the area around the Thruway. The other thing I would tell you in residential properties, people don't like to necessarily hear this, but they don't stay residential properties forever. You know I'm helping the IDA build a business park in Catskill right now. We tore five houses down. I'll note that all five of those residents are living in a far nicer house in far nicer neighborhoods now. We helped them all get in a better place, but that's just part of business. Some day that residential lot somebody comes knocking and they'd be surprised how the memories, everybody's has a price tag I guess.

Supervisor Ruso: Sometimes they go the other way.

Rene VanSchaack: Sometimes it goes the other way. So, yeah, I think you're always gonna have a mixed-use up there because houses are there and there's vacant lots, and I don't know what your intentions are, but our intentions are to try to help you get something built on vacant lots that is of net positive to you from the tax basis.

Supervisor Ruso: For everyone's sake, I have had in the recent past, less than two years, three specific projects brought to my attention looking for potential. All of them require some level of sewer and water, actually one is asking for water and one is asking for sewer and the third is asking for both.

Rene VanSchaack: Both, yeah. That all depends on the lot size you know. If you can eliminate the sewer off your lot, and I don't know how the wells are in that section of 9W, I've never really dealt with anybody up here, but you're up against that parcel. The topography on the ridge there, all the wells ought to be pretty good on the west side of the road I would think on that. So again here's the goal. You're gonna have \$9.8 million, it's gonna come over 30 years, you can go to the bank and bond it because you're not gonna do it in little bits and pieces, this is gonna be multi-million-dollar projects whenever you decide what they are. But you decide what they are so...

Supervisor Ruso: Coming from a person who likes to have financially net, even number, thinking \$205,000 a year, whatever, I know it rises up by that 1.5 percent every year. You know this would have to be bonded and bonding schemes often do require a description of the revenue stream by which you're going to pay that bond. So if you're gonna have a bond for let's say water line extension, these are all water line and/or sewer line extensions, from our nearby municipalities. From Ravena there's one, from Coxsackie is another. The cost of that, the last one that we had a meeting down in the County, was it \$3.5 million?

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Rene VanSchaack: Yeah. As you know there's your problem. The State Comptroller's Office, as Jeff is noting, whenever you want to try to do a water or sewer extension, you have to just write it as a financial threshold. Last I knew I want to say it was about \$980 a year. I think it might be over \$1,000, \$1,100 now something. But if your sewer bills and water bills are gonna be more than that to support the system, they will never approve it. So in this case there's literally going to be \$0 capital cost for the most part to the users. Just like now...

Supervisor Ruso: Depends on how big the project goes.

Rene VanSchaack: Yeah, right. We may have to choose to put some of it out on the future, but if the future users only have to only pick up 10 percent of the capital expense. To be determined.

Supervisor Ruso: And that's all determined by us. If we want to put all of the project money in one basket so to say -- in essence half to go here, half to go there, whatever the case might be -- I know that...

Rene VanSchaack: Well, I've got a couple ideas for you because I won't get into them all here tonight when I work with your liaisons and one's a real low-hanging fruit. I think it could be done really cheap and I think the IDA would definitely fund half of that one with you. The other ones would take a little bit longer on that one. I'm pretty certain the IDA would fund on that one too. You know, we'd come in. But the point is with the revenue stream in here first and we have that in here now, we have that locked in by solid contract, and we have enforcement mechanisms in place to make sure (unable to understand). I don't know how it gets much better than that and this thing.

Supervisor Ruso: Anyone like to weigh in?

Councilmember Sottolano: I think all my questions were answered.

Rene VanSchaack: Just let me know who you want to be your two people. It could be you and somebody else. It don't matter.

Supervisor Ruso: I think we'll have a bit of an email dialogue with us to see. Are we limited to no more than two?

Rene VanSchaack: Well, I'm trying to keep it at two just so that if we get together it's not a quorum and it doesn't have to be a posted public meeting.

Supervisor Ruso: Of course.

Rene VanSchaack: Because these are really just, their purpose is to informally be able to meet with me, have a discussion, and then come back formally to you guys.

Supervisor Ruso: Thank you, sir. Thank you for your time.

Rene VanSchaack: Thank you so much for the time, appreciate it.

Public Comment Period

Richard Guthrie: I just take note this evening that as one of the items I observed during that very busy public meeting we had the other night is please I see on the Agenda tonight is something about technology. Can you guys consider bringing us up to date with those recorders and going from tape to digital?

Supervisor Ruso: You missed the last meeting didn't you?

Richard Guthrie: I did miss it. I wasn't here.

Supervisor Ruso: Well, I'll repeat myself. We're buying, it's on the agenda, it is something called an owl. It sits right here. I can best describe it as kind of like a lava lamp. That's about the size.

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Richard Guthrie: Elf on the shelf type of thing?

Supervisor Ruso: And it has three cameras and it focuses on whoever speaks. So it would be looking at you and looking at me and somebody who clears his throat back there, you know that kind of stuff, and it will focus it's microphone as well and then this can be downloaded so this stuff will be gone and we're anticipating the arrival of the owl in time for our meeting on the 19th of June. So that goes to your comment I think.

Richard Guthrie: Brilliant thinking let me tell you. Thank you.

Supervisor Ruso: Yeah, it's been in the works quite awhile. Actually, Barb Finke has been pushing and pushing a lot more for more than just a few weeks.

Richard Guthrie: Will that produce a transcript? Will it transcribe the audio so that we don't have somebody typing out the conversations that we had during the meeting?

Councilmember VanEtten: Barb had talked to ITS and she's in talks with them and I don't think that that's been to see what they've come up with and they are working on it.

Richard Guthrie: Excellent, that would save everybody so much aggravation.

Supervisor Ruso: Well, I've had conversations, if you look at any other Town website, Minutes. They are not verbatim Minutes. Do you know anybody who does verbatim? Verbatim Minutes are not, so they don't get everyone who says 'excuse me' and the ers and aahs in there. It's not that purposeful, it's not required.

Richard Guthrie: It's like a Court stenographer transcript.

Supervisor Ruso: No, heavens no.

Richard Guthrie: Fine but just as long as it catches the gist or a content of the conversations.

Supervisor Ruso: Those Minutes can be done. In fact, I've spoken to the Chairs of both those ancillary Boards. You don't need verbatim Minutes. They can be done in an hour. They can be done in an hour. So, I'll talk to them at length.

Michelle Storm, Esq.: They need to be approved, that's usually the delay in publishing.

Supervisor Ruso: Of course. Well, just as in point, there was a two hour meeting the other night ago and the Minutes for that are going to take a long time if you do verbatim.

Richard Guthrie: Exactly, however, even if you do a transcript of sorts there's still a long delay lag in between the meeting and the public access to them. Alright, thank you, I've had my say.

Peter Melewski: Yes, quick question, can you provide any updates and detail on where MJ Engineering is with the study?

Supervisor Ruso: No, but I have seen their trucks looking and going around about. They are supposed to have a report in the next couple months and I suggested mid-summer. So I don't have any further update, but they have been contracted with and approved. Everything's been approved.

Peter Melewski: Okay, so they have started working.

Supervisor Ruso: They are beginning their study, yes. That's pretty much it. No, they don't have, actually I've asked them, they look for July for the public meeting that they promised, but I will follow up with them again because I've been busy doing the other things. Good reminder.

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TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE, COUNTY OF GREENE

RESOLUTION 95-2024
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RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE FROM I.T.S FOR TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE

WHEREAS the Town of New Baltimore recognizes the need to upgrade technology in the Town, and,

WHEREAS Intelligent Technology Solutions (I.T.S.) has submitted a quote for an OWL Video/Audio device for streaming of meetings to a YouTube format, and,

WHEREAS to best implement the streaming of meetings it is further recommended by I.T.S. that the OWL Video/Audio device utilize a dedicated laptop computer which will also need to be purchased, and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Town Board of the Town of New Baltimore approves the purchase of said OWL for a total of \$2,611.95, with \$933.00 of set up fees to be added, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Town Board of the Town of New Baltimore approves a three year contract for a dedicated laptop and associated service agreement for a total cost of \$1,833 for those three years.

Motion by Supervisor Ruso seconded by Councilmember Downes

Councilmember VanEtten: I think it's a great idea, we need this.

Supervisor Ruso: This has a format where it will feed right into the YouTube format so it can go within a couple days into that and the recording process is what we're looking to have voice recognition type of Minutes set up.

Councilmember Sottolano: The YouTube will be like an archive of the videos. They'll remain on the YouTube?

Supervisor Ruso: Well, yeah, until YouTube takes them down. I don't know. I'm not a YouTube expert.

Councilmember Sottolano: Right now there's just one video per meeting, but if there's an archive so people can go back and see a meeting that they missed, like the Greene County site has.

Supervisor Ruso: From what I've heard, once it's on YouTube it's gone forever. It's on forever.

Councilmember Kash: We believe that this owl will be able to auto-transcribe the meetings?

Supervisor Ruso: We're hopeful.

Councilmember Kash: Okay and would that be used for the Town Board, the Planning Board, and the ZBA to help everybody out or would it just be the Town Board's?

Supervisor Ruso: No, I think we could use it for any such meetings. This is going to be purchased, we had to put the money up in the first place because there is a grant associated with this through Senator Hinchey's office that we've already submitted for upgrades to Town. This is actually again a specific point to earlier conversations which is why instead of having an annual service agreement of \$633, we're gonna pay the service agreement upfront of \$1,833 because you don't get grant reimbursement unless you spent the money. And, of course, they said do not use the same laptop that Barb will often use and connect to the owl, you need a

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dedicated laptop. Okay, fine, I'm not the expert. So, Mr. Guthrie, if you want to say something now is a good time.

Richard Guthrie: Will this be available for the Town Court as well or is that...?

Supervisor Ruso: No, no, no. We can't do that.

Richard Guthrie: I appreciate that.

Councilmember Kash: I believe, Rich, that they have their own recording system and cameras.

Richard Guthrie: There are issues involved in that.

Supervisor Ruso: Separation, east is east, west is west. We'll stay away.

AYES: Ruso, Downes, Kash, Sottolano, VanEtten

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion Carried

TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE, COUNTY OF GREENE

RESOLUTION 96-2024

JUNE 10, 2024

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR TO PAY AUDITED CLAIMS

WHEREAS the Town Clerk has presented claims to the Town Board for audit and review, and

WHEREAS the Town Board has audited claims 2024-06-01 to 2024-06-34, it is

RESOLVED that the Supervisor is hereby authorized to pay claims 2024-06-01 to 2024-06-34.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk will prepare an abstract and hold it for public review until July 31, 2024.

Motion by Supervisor Ruso seconded by Councilmember VanEtten

AYES: Ruso, Downes, Kash, Sottolano, VanEtten

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion Carried

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Deputy Supervisor Dellisanti: The 22nd of June.

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Supervisor Ruso: Oh, yes. Yes, for Upcoming Meetings, the 22nd of June is the Emergency Preparedness Meeting. Yes, you're right, that missed getting on the list. That's gonna be here be here at Town Hall starting at 1PM.

Councilmember Kash: And you can register through the Town Clerk's Office and I think there's also an email and QR code that's I think on the Facebook page.

Supervisor Ruso: QR code for registration, we have to touch base to see how many, they have a list and we have a list, and we need to make sure we have enough seats for everybody. How many do we have?

Deputy Town Clerk Eldred: Ten.

Supervisor Ruso: That's what we have. I think a good number more which is good.

Public Comment Period/Community Events

None

Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Downes seconded by Councilmember VanEtten, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 PM

AYES: Ruso, Downes, Kash, Sottolano, VanEtten

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion Carried

Supervisor Ruso: Good night everybody.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara M. Finke RMC CTO
Town Clerk