



Pursuant to NYS Executive Order 202/2020 issued by the Governor, the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt is holding meetings virtually via a platform known as Zoom. The public can observe the meetings in real time and they are recorded as usual and posted on the Town Website.

*A full audio/video recording of this meeting is available at [www.townofcortlandt.com](http://www.townofcortlandt.com)*

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt was conducted on March 16, 2021, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. The following elected officials and appointed staff were in attendance:

LINDA D. PUGLISI	Supervisor
FRANCIS X. FARRELL	Councilmember
DEBRA COSTELLO	Councilmember
RICHARD BECKER	Councilmember
JAMES CREIGHTON	Councilmember

Also present:

TOM WOOD	Town Attorney
MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM	Deputy Town Attorney
LAROUÉ ROSE SHATZKIN	Town Clerk
CHRISTINE B. COTHREN	Deputy Town Clerk - ABSENT
PATRICIA ROBCKE	Comptroller
MICHAEL PREZIOSI	Director, DOTS
CLAUDIA VAHEY	Human Resources Coordinator
STEPHEN FERREIRA	Director, DES
TINA TOBACK	Senior Office Assistant

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

Supervisor Puglisi led all in attendance with a Pledge to the Flag.

### **SUPERVISOR'S PROCLAMATIONS & REPORTS**

Supervisor Linda Puglisi commented that it has been one year since the COVID-19 pandemic, and it has been a rough year. Many wonderful people have lost their lives and only 13% of Westchester County residents have been vaccinated so far. Masks and social distancing are still necessary. At all times we thank those on the front lines taking care of us, from emergency services to postal workers to grocery store clerks to our own Town Hall employees.



It is Women's History month and six of the Town's nine elected officials are women – the most in a 233 year history. There have only been two women Supervisors in the Town's history and the Senior Center is named after the first, Supervisor Muriel Morabito, who acquired the land for the center. Muriel was a poet and a very funny lady.

Councilman Creighton chaired an important Police Reform Committee and did an excellent job over several months.

The Town of Cortlandt will be receiving between 3.5 - 3.7 million dollars from the Federal Government as part of a COVID Relief Package. The first installment comes this year, and the funds are for specific uses.

The Supervisor indicated she met with the County Police, the School Districts and the Cortlandt Coalition, chaired by Colleen Anderson, to discuss a safe summer program in support of substance abuse prevention.

Today's meeting will be closing in memory of four individuals, including Croton Trustee John Habib, ZBA member

## **ROLL CALL**

On a roll call attendance taken by Town Clerk Shatzkin, all Town Board members indicated their presence.

## **TOWN BOARD REPORTS**

### **Councilmember Carter gave her report**

#### **OF NOTE:**

Councilmember Carter commented on St Patrick's Day and how unfortunate it is that there will not be a parade this year, but that next year's will be bigger and better than ever.

Councilman Creighton did such an excellent job on the Police Reform initiative. It was a wonderful group of people with very different points of view, who participated in discussing very difficult topics, and Councilman Creighton managed the process and kept everyone respectful and deserves commendation for his efforts.



**Councilmember James Creighton gave his report**  
**OF NOTE:**

Councilmember James Creighton commented that this is the first year since well before he was in High School that he will not be marching in a St. Patrick's Day parade. It has been a year marked with Sadness and some wonderful people have been lost in our community over the last year, including those being honored at the end of this meeting. They include Croton Trustee John Habib, ZBA Member Jim Seirmarco, the Town Pool Manager Rob Segnit, and Larry Keefe, local Veteran.

With the impending closure of Indian Point, we are focused not only on the decommissioning but on the outcomes of the displaced workers. Local officials have been helping to bring in training events and job programs. Lots of promises made to these workers have not materialized so the Town is co-sponsoring a Green Energy Academy training event that will help displaced workers and local people learn about and transition to the green energy sector. More details are coming and the Town is looking forward to seeing how our friends in Labor and these various organizations can help our displaced workers.

On the Police Reform side, thank you to everyone for your kind words and comments. The Town Board is receiving and filing the Report on our Agenda this evening and some members of the committee are with us here in the audience. There were 9 members including Councilman Creighton as the Chair, they included former Chief of Police of Buchanan Brian Tubbs, Jamila Adams White from Indivisible, Ira Gherkin from School Administration, Barbara Helecki who was a former Master Plan Committee Member and has several family members who are Police Officers, William Hodge who is a Retired Senior Investigator with the New York State Police, Larry Kressley who is local community organizer and participated in the Town's Diversity Task Force, Ian Orr who is an attorney in civil litigation dealing with civil rights matters, Ken Russell Senior who worked for 25 years as a member of the NYPD and is a proud veteran. There were also three alternate members, including Ken Russell Jr who is a retired supervisor from NYPD, Rowan Lindley and Deborah Cohen were both educators and members of the Social Justice Committee from Indivisible.

Many other Town Staff, community members and elected officials participated as well. Both State and County Police came to present to the committee. It was an important review of policing in our community and the Report will be available publicly on our website. The Town of Cortlandt supports our police and seeks to do a better job through the reform and reimagining process. Most police related calls in the Town of Cortlandt are service related. The committee did an amazing job and it has been an honor to work with this incredibly diverse group of people who had honest conversations and hopefully this report will be received favorably by the County of Westchester and the State of New York.

**Councilmember Becker gave his report**  
**OF NOTE:**

Councilman Richard Becker further elaborated on what a productive exercise the Police Reform Committee turned out to be and commented on the incredible dedication shown by everyone who participated.



A year into COVID, there seem to be some divergent issues going on. We have three magnificently successful vaccines being distributed and a large section of the population that are skeptical and afraid of them despite how safe and effective they are. Many people don't realize what a miracle it is that we even have these vaccines, and that they were developed so quickly. For those who lived through the AIDS epidemic, we watched millions of dollars be raised in an effort to come up with a vaccine that was never found or developed. Worldwide, the most common causes of death are Dengue, Malaria and Tuberculosis and there are no vaccines for those diseases. In the Hudson Valley we are plagued by Lyme Disease every year; a potential vaccine proved ineffective and was withdrawn. For the COVID vaccines to come out with an efficacy where all of them prevent the disease, and almost completely eliminate the potential for hospitalization and death is truly a miracle. It is each persons civic responsibility to consider our country, our economy and our neighbors and to get vaccinated. This should be an easy decision.

On more mundane issues, we are authorizing the Department of Technical Services this evening to investigate the repair of three dams. In our area, we have a lot of lakes and reservoirs and a lot of the infrastructure is aging and needs repair. The DEC has been notifying us about these dams, many of which are not owned by the Town. This limits what the Town is able to do. The Town tries to help homeowners and Homeowner's Associations come up with remedies, but they will have to be fixed. We will take the proactive steps of finding out exactly what needs to be done to protect homeowners and attempt to ease their financial burden.

**Councilmember Farrell gave his report**  
**OF NOTE:**

Councilman Frank Farrell shared that he is pleased to see the Town will take another step forward on the Cortlandt Pitch proposal this evening. The applicant wants to develop a small corner of the 108 acre parcel in Verplanck and will provide many recreational fields to the Town. This step will allow him to proceed with organizing the financial part of his endeavor with confidence and is a step forward in what will still be a long road ahead. There are many details to be worked out, including hearing and implementing suggestions from the community so that everyone will be proud of it and happy to live near it.

Councilman Farrell commented on the Police Reform Committee and how many people have strongly held opinions and sincere beliefs on these issues, and Councilman Creighton led a productive and civil discussion where everyone was heard, and where that same diverse Committee was able to come up with a series of unanimous recommendations. It was very well done.

It has been a strange and sad year since COVID lockdowns were implemented. It has been a year of frustration, change and unprecedented activity. It is heartening to see the light at the end of the tunnel, as the weather improves and more people get vaccinated. The vaccine has been tested so rigorously and is a miracle of science and medicine. The fear of the vaccines is misplaced and it is so important for everyone to get vaccinated.



St. Patrick's day celebrations and parades have become more than a celebration of all things Irish, but also represent a celebration of Springtime and togetherness for the community. We are missing that this year, but the end is in sight. Happy St. Patrick's Day to all.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Approve the Minutes for the February 9, 2021 Regular Meeting and the February 22, 2021 Special Meeting

Councilmember Carter made a motion to approve the above Minutes, seconded by Councilmember Becker with all voting **AYE**.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **HEARING OF CITIZENS – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

##### **Deborah Cohen of Ossining NY**

Ms. Cohen was an alternate member of the Police Reform Task force and shared that Item Number 11 on the Police Report did not specifically include religion as a protected group. She asked that it be specifically included, and stated what an eye-opening experience it was to participate in the Task Force, largely due to the diversity of the members.

##### **Warren Smith of 203 9<sup>th</sup> Street**

Mr. Smith asked to have some items clarified on the Cortlandt Pitch Project, including how long the developer has to solidify their finances, how long the actual lease would last, the solar array on the roof, and what happens if the Town's SEQRA process and infrastructure is not resolved or ready in year's time.

Town Attorney Tom Wood explained that this is an Option Agreement for one year, which gives the developer the right to get their investors in a row, and allows the Town the time to do a site plan review and go through the SEQRA process. If everything comes together, then the lease commences at the end of the 12 months or sooner, depending on when everyone's process is complete. The lease would be for 49 years, as commercial lenders require a long-term situation. If there are any financial difficulties in the future, the building can only be used for the same activity, and any transfer to another owner by the lenders is subject to the Town Board's review.

Attorney Wood further elaborated that since the land is owned by the Town, it cannot be taxed, but that the building will be taxed at the same rate as if it were on any other commercial property. The lease includes a schedule of payments. For the first 20 years, the payments are approximately \$450,000. per year, which is reflective of the developer's contribution towards the cost of the site, infrastructure, and a PILOT to be divided among the Town and School District. At the end of the 20 year period, the payment adjusts into a rent column for the town, the property will be reassessed, and there is an inflationary clause.



The rental monies for the Solar array on the roof is payable directly to the Town in the event of any default by the operator, providing additional financial protection.

There is a mutual agreement between the developer and the town that all the pieces must be in place to proceed. The SEQRA process is a little more in depth in this case because of a federal grant being involved. It is subject to the National Environmental Protection Act and the process is coordinated with the Department of Commerce. Contract administration of the grant is currently underway and moving along.

Supervisor Puglisi recalled that the 99 acre property had been purchased from Con Edison several years ago, and that throughout the years there have been many industrial proposals from private investors including the recently rejected Port Cortlandt. This is a smaller business, and the owner has presented to the local homeowner's association. It will be a lower impact and good for the community. The area needs economic growth with the closure of Indian Point and this will chip away at that.

**Bernard Vaughey of 215 Broadway**

Mr. Vaughey noted that the Resolution regarding the grant included the Discovery Center as well as the Quarry Property.

Attorney Wood thanked Mr. Vaughey for his attention and noted that it was an editorial issue that had been carried forward from previous drafts and would be corrected.

**REPORTS**

**Receive and File the following:**

For the month of January 2021 from the Department of Recreation and the Receiver of Taxes.

For the Month of February from the Office of the Aging, Receiver of Taxes, and the Town Clerk.

2020 Annual Report from the Montrose Improvement District.

2020 Submittal to NYS Division of Building Standards and Codes from DOTS – Code Enforcement

Final Town of Cortlandt Police Reform Report

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Receive and File the following:**

1. Revised and updated Full Environmental Assessment Form in connection with NRP Group LLC request for Zoning Text Amendments at 119 Oregon Road. (SEE RESOLUTIONS)



## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Receive and File the following:**

1. Letter from Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct requesting parking restrictions be lifted on May 1, 2020 with a rain date of May 2, 2020. (SEE RESOLUTIONS)
2. Letter from Town of Philipstown regarding Continental Village Water District; *Refer to Legal, DOTS and DES. AS AMENDED.*
3. Letter from resident of Alpine Drive regarding safety issues; Refer to DES.

Councilmember Becker made a motion to receive and file the above, seconded by Councilmember Creighton with all voting **AYE**.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO 86-21 RE:** Authorize the Supervisor to execute contracts with various Libraries servicing the Town of Cortlandt.

**RESOLUTION NO 87-21 RE:** Authorize the Supervisor to execute an Option and Long-Term Ground Lease Agreement with the Purveyor of Cortlandt Pitch for a portion of town-owned property.

**RESOLUTION NO 88-21 RE:** Authorize Town Staff to Circulate the Town Board's Notice of Intent to Serve as Lead Agency pursuant to SEQRA for proposed zoning text amendments and re-development of property located at 119 Oregon Road.

**RESOLUTION NO 89-21 RE:** Authorize the settlement of a tax certiorari with Skyview Nursing Realty LLC.

**RESOLUTION NO 90-21 RE:** Renew Town Insurance Policies through March 31, 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO 91-21 RE:** Authorize the Town of Cortlandt to co-sponsor a Green Energy Academy Training Event to deliver technical job training for energy efficiency focusing on electrical systems and thermal systems.

**RESOLUTION NO 92-21 RE:** Authorize parking along the west side of Quaker Bridge Road on May 1, 2021 and May 2, 2021 for the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual I Love My Parks Day.

Councilmember Creighton made a motion to adopt the above resolutions, seconded by Councilmember Farrell with all voting **AYE**.

Supervisor Puglisi noted that Resolution 87-21 regarding the Lease Agreement had language added for prevailing wages.



Attorney Wood explained that Skyview Nursing challenged their assessment both with the Village of Croton-on-Hudson as well as the Town, and that the final result is a refund of \$10,000. for two years from the Town. The village will need to refund about \$100,000.

Comptroller Patty Robcke stated she and Deputy Attorney Michael Cunningham have been working with our insurance broker Arthur Gallagher as the Town is up for renewal for our liability, property and casualty insurance. The resolution authorizes expenditure up to a maximum amount, and the final number will be in in a few days. Payment should be very close to prior years.

Agenda items for DOTS:

**RESOLUTION NO 93-21 RE:** Authorize Director of DOTS to bid TE Contract 2021.01 – Charles J. Cook Basketball Half Court.

**RESOLUTION NO 94-21 RE:** Authorize DOTS to bid TE Contract 2021.02 – Broadway Streetscape 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Street

**RESOLUTION NO 95-21 RE:** Authorize Director of DOTS to execute proposal for professional services for Cortlandt Lake Dam.

**RESOLUTION NO 96-21 RE:** Authorize Director of DOTS to execute proposal for professional services for Furnace Brook Dam.

**RESOLUTION NO 97-21 RE:** Authorize Director of DOTS to execute proposal for professional services for Westchester Lake Dam.

**RESOLUTION NO 98-21 RE:** Authorize an intermittent leave of absence for an employee in DOTS.

**RESOLUTION NO 99-21 RE:** Authorize and intermittent leave of absence for an employee in DES.

**RESOLUTION NO 100-21 RE:** Appoint Eric O'Brien from Walter Panas High School as a WISE Intern in the Town Attorney's Office.

Councilmember Farrell made a motion to adopt the above resolutions, seconded by Councilmember Carter with all voting **AYE**.

Supervisor Puglisi mentioned that the Town Board recently voted on re-doing the tennis courts, which had basketball hoops incorporated. This half court will be an independent feature.





There was recently a meeting with residents of the Westchester Lake Dam area, which needs repairs. Resolution 97-21 authorizes up to \$150,000. for professional services.

Director of DOTS Michael Preziosi commented that recreational projects like the Basketball court are great for the community and fun for the Engineering staff; he is hopeful the bid will do well.

The Town owns two Dams, both professional service contracts being requested are for minor repairs. Westchester Lake Dam is privately owned but professional services are being retained on behalf of the residents to help them meet and exceed NYS DEC requirements. It is a slightly more costly proposal but is necessary to bring the dam into compliance.

Councilman Farrell commented on how nicely the Cook Pool Campus is coming together and thanked staff for their hard work. In addition to the pool, new bath house, miniature golf, tennis courts and basketball, there is new signage pointing people up to the fitness trail. The campus has become a feature of the Town that all can feel proud of.

## **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Receive and File the following:**

1. Traffic Calming Evaluation Memorandum from Director of DOTS regarding Laurie Road.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO 101-21 RE:** Adopt a revised Supplemental Emergency Plan pursuant to New York State Directives.

Councilmember Carter moved to adopt the above, seconded by Councilmember Becker. All voted AYE.

**RESOLUTION NO 102-21 RE:** Cancel remaining school tax bill for Dickerson Pond Valeria Sewer Treatment Plant, acquired by Town of Cortlandt.

Councilmember Carter made a motion to adopt the above, seconded by Councilmember Becker. The Board was polled as follows:

Councilwoman Carter	AYE
Councilman Creighton	AYE
Councilman Farrell	AYE



Councilman Becker            AYE  
Supervisor Puglisi            RECUSED

The motion passed by a vote of 4 AYES.

**BUDGET TRANSFERS - NONE**

**REPORTS FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS**

**REPORTS FROM STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**SECOND HEARING OF CITIZENS**

Councilmember Creighton made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Councilmember Farrell with all voting **AYE**.

The meeting was adjourned in memory of Jim Seimarco who was on the Zoning Board of Appeals for many years, Rob Segnet, who was the Town Pool Manager for many years, John Habib who was a Trustee in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson, and Larry Keefe who was a well-known Verplanck resident.

The meeting adjourned at 08:03 PM

**ADJOURNMENT**

**NEXT TOWN BOARD MEETING**

**April 13, 2021 at 7:00 pm**  
**[www.townofcortlandt.com](http://www.townofcortlandt.com)**

Respectfully submitted,

Laroue Rose Shatzkin  
Town Clerk