

**Danby Town Board  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
March 11, 2019, 7pm, Danby Town Hall**

**Present:**

Councilpersons: Leslie Connors, Ric Dietrich (Supervisor), Jim Holahan, Jack Miller, Matt Ulinski

**Others Present:**

Town Clerk Pamela Goddard  
Highway Carl Seamon  
Legislator Dan Klein  
Public Ted Crane, Ronda Roaring, Marge Seamon, Alex Pfeifer, Susan Franklin

**Meeting Opened at 7:06 pm**

**Privilege of the Floor**

Ted Crane announced upcoming events sponsored by the Danby Community Council; March 17 Funeral Preparation. It was also noted that the West Danby Fire Department has a benefit pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 16.

**Conservation Advisory Council Requests**

Ulinski opened a discussion regarding draft resolutions on behalf of the Conservation Advisory Council (CAC), for board consideration. The proposal for increasing the size of the CAC from 5-7 members to 5-9 members will wait until the first April meeting. The proposal to extend the terms of these members from two years to three years is being withdrawn after Ulinski confirmed that NYS municipal law limits the terms of Conservation Advisory Councils and Boards to two-year terms.

Ulinski asked the Board to consider approval and acceptance of the CAC 2018 annual report.

**RESOLUTION NO. 34 OF 2019 - CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT**

**Resolved,** That the Town Board of the Town of Danby accepts the 2018 Annual Report of the Conservation Advisory Council.

**Moved by Ulinski, Second by Dietrich. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Connors, Holahan, Miller, Ulinski, Dietrich**

There was discussion regarding a resolution in support of carbon fee and dividend. Connors said that she would like to know more about the fee and what it's attached to. Ulinski did not have more information, other than what is included in the wording of the resolution. Connors stated that she would follow up with Joel Gagnon for more details. Crane asked for more background regarding a change in thought from "cap and trade" to "Carbon Fee and Dividend." Ulinski explained that this proposal is being introduced as bipartisan bills in both houses of the Federal Congress. Therefore it is thought that this proposal has a better chance of moving forward on the national level.

**RESOLUTION NO. 35 OF 2019 - URGING UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS THE ENERGY INNOVATION AND CARBON DIVIDEND ACT (H.R. 763)**

**Whereas**, climate scientists worldwide are in near-unanimous agreement that the planet Earth is warming rapidly and to a degree that is perilous to human civilization, to numerous species, and to the global ecosystem, and

**Whereas**, human activity is a significant contributor to global warming, especially through the use of fossil fuels and the associated release of methane and carbon dioxide, and

**Whereas**, a prompt and major shift away from fossil fuels is a necessary cornerstone to any meaningful response to climate change, and

**Whereas**, the recently published Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change SR1.5 Report (<<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>>) states that “Policies reflecting a high price on emissions are necessary” as a key component of any effort to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degree Celsius, and

**Whereas**, this IPCC report also suggests that any carbon pricing policy should be designed to “balance between incentivizing low-carbon behavior and mitigating the adverse distributional consequences of higher energy prices”, and

**Whereas**, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763) has been introduced in Congress and would establish a steadily increasing fee on fossil fuels at the point of their entry into the economy; which fee would be straightforward and make effective use of free-market mechanisms to promote the transition to greater energy conservation and renewable sources of energy, and

**Whereas**, the act would return all revenues (minus 3% for administration) to each American as a monthly dividend, to offset expected higher prices for goods and services, and

**Whereas**, this revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend is an effective method to reduce carbon emissions for the following reasons:

1. The fee would motivate everyone to conserve and adopt renewable energy without the need for extensive governmental regulatory controls or infrastructure;
2. The fee would employ a market approach to encourage innovative processes, not only in energy production, but also in every field in which energy is consumed, e.g. electric cars, mass transportation, architectural planning and construction, water heating, lighting, and air conditioning in residential and commercial buildings;
3. Levying the fee at the point of production would be more efficient, less expensive and provide more accurate signals than would doing so at the point of consumption;
4. The fee would incentivize the development and use of alternative energies and attendant technologies, eliminating the need for government subsidies that attempt to forecast alternative energy winners and losers;
5. Because the fee is levied on the same basis on all businesses, it is fairer to every business and easier to administer than alternatives, such as a cap and trade system;
6. A border adjustment would assess a fee on goods traded with countries without a comparable carbon price, thereby maintaining the competitiveness of US businesses and discouraging relocation to such countries and also encouraging other countries to price carbon, and

**Whereas**, such a policy would protect lower and middle-income households, as the dividend would allow more than 70% of American households to benefit financially, break even, or have only minimal increased costs (<0.2% income) from this policy; the policy would also create jobs, as the dividend puts money back into local economies, and Whereas further delay in responding to this crisis increases the risk of catastrophic climate change, imminently threatens low-lying coastal areas and land and sea species, threatens water supplies, increases the frequency of severe weather events, increases the cost of undertaking adequate responses, and increases risks to the global economy,

**Now, Therefore, it is**

**Resolved**, on recommendation of the Conservation Advisory Council, that the Danby Town Board endorses a carbon fee and dividend and urges our representatives in the United States Congress to enact it into law, and it is

**Further Resolved**, that copies of the resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Representative Tom Reed, Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer, New York State Senator James Seward, New York State Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, and the New York State Association of Towns.

**Moved by Ulinski, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Connors, Holahan, Miller, Ulinski, Dietrich**

## Highway Barns Energy Audit

A second energy audit proposal quote was received on March 11 from Halco. The third proposal is either delayed or will not be forthcoming, as the company in question does not have all of the equipment required for the “Level II” energy audit recommended for the Clean Energy Communities Grant improvements at the Highway facility. Ulinski did a quick comparison and found that the Halco and Taitem proposals seem to be very similar. The Halco proposal is \$1,000 more than the Taitem proposal.

There was further discussion regarding the requirements of a “Level II” audit. The Halco proposal specifically stated that it is a full Level II audit. Holahan stated that, to the best of his knowledge, the Taitem proposal is also for a Level II audit though not a full audit. Both of these proposals satisfy the requirements of the grant.

Crane raised a question of potential conflict in review of the proposals. A Councilperson, despite recusal, had spoken as a representative of Taitem but no representative of Halco was present to advocate for its proposal. Dietrich stated that he was simply looking to Holahan’s expertise in the area to advise whether the two proposals are “apples to apples.”

Connors said that, as the Halco proposal had just been received, she would like more information from them. Dietrich expressed concern that this project be moved along before the Town lost its opportunity due to change in the weather. He stated that, at this point, making a decision on this is a TB responsibility.

Holahan stated that it appears that the Halco energy audit may review more possible energy saving measures than the Taitem proposal included. He advised that it would be good to get clarification prior to making a decision. Ulinski wondered whether the additional energy saving review is necessary. Dietrich reviewed his understanding of the purpose of the energy audit, as a baseline measure for documenting energy improvements.

Ulinski proposed that he spend time in the next two weeks gathering more information with Highway and the companies making the proposals. A vote could happen at the April 1 Town Board meeting. Connors suggested that a special meeting could be held, prior to April 1, to address this question.

Following further discussion, the Board agreed to authorize Ulinski to do the required research and make a decision on the Board’s behalf. He will report at the next meeting how the decision was made.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 36 OF 2019 - AUTHORIZE NEGOTIATION AND DETERMINATION OF ENERGY AUDIT PROPOSAL**

**Resolved**, That the Town Board of the Town of Danby authorizes Matt Ulinski to gather more information, compare the proposals, and make a decision regarding an energy audit of the Danby Highway Barns related to a Clean Energy Community Grant.

**Moved by Connors, Second by Miller. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Connors, Miller, Ulinski, Dietrich**

**Recused: Holahan**

## **Short Reports and Correspondence**

Court reports from Justices Huddle and Klinger were distributed to the Board.

Clerk Goddard informed the Board that the Danby Community Park Association was notified that they have been awarded the \$5,000 grant for the natural playground.

Clerk Goddard reported that Oliva Vent has expressed an intention to have herself and Ben Rosenblum attend the April 1 Town Board meeting to make a presentation regarding potential development at 1839-1849 Danby Road. There was a discussion regarding ways to assure the principal neighbors (the Danby Community Park Association, Danby Community Church, and Richard Hardesty) are informed about that presentation date.

Connors reported on activity of the group of horse owners/riders in the east side of central Danby. They are developing a public education pamphlet advising motorists of what to do when encountering a horse and rider on the road. This information will be sent to the Danby Area News, will be posted on the Danby web site, and will be available at the Town Hall. The group is working with the Highway Department on signage to alert drivers to share the road with horse riders.

## **Planning Transition Report**

Supervisor Dietrich made a report on the new hires in Code and Planning. A meeting will be held in the next week, between the Supervisor and both the outgoing and incoming staff in those offices. Dietrich stated that this is going smoothly. Planner Randall will attend the next Planning Board meetings and introduce them to John Czamanske. Randall will be on retainer for the next several months, and she will be working on joint projects at the County level which will involve Danby.

John Norman and John Czamanske will attend one of the April Town Board meetings, as an opportunity to more fully meet this Board. Dietrich expressed confidence that both of these people will be able to continue the tasks and projects related to their offices.

## **Legislator's Report**

Dan Klein made a short report. Danby properties were reassessed in 2018. He reported that 95% of Danby properties either had no change or were assessed at a higher value. Klein noted that a higher assessment does not necessarily mean that the property owner will pay an equivalent higher amount in property related taxes.

In related information, Supervisor Dietrich reported that the West Danby census area has been shifted from Newfield to central Danby for the 2020 national census.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

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Pamela Goddard, Town Clerk