

**Town of Pawlet**  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, June 24, 2024 7:30pm**  
**Meeting at townhall and**  
**via Zoom platform**

**Members present:**

Jessica Van Oort, Chairperson

John Sabotka, Vice Chairperson

Rik Sassa, Clerk/Secretary

Frank Nelson

Gary Baierlein

Mark Frost

Harley Cudney

Wayne Clarke

Nancy Morlino (Pawlet Zoning Administrator)

Linda Lynton, Pawlet resident

Hillary Solomon, Mettowee Conservation District

**Members absent:**

**Item 1. Call to Order:**

Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:34pm

**Item 2. Approval of Agenda Items- Review/Add/Delete:**

The agenda as usual with Jessica adding some comments about open meeting rules.

**Item 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting:**

Rik Sassa moved to approve last minutes, Mark Frost seconded, all approved.

**Item 4. Zoning Administrator's Report- Nancy Morlino:**

Nancy reported that of the 18 property owners that have shipping containers in town, 16 have come into compliance. There is one remaining that she is working with and one is in violation. Jessica had a question about camping trailers in the zoning bylaws that Nancy had noted. It was decided that if there needs to be an edit it can be done during the coming hearing. Nancy also noted there was some confusion over the term "clinic" and the need for it to be tied to health care so there could not be a possible loop hole for say a shooting clinic.

**Item 5. Rutland Regional Commission Report- John Sabotka and Harley Cudney:**

John reported that the Regional Commission approved several items on their agenda.

**Item 6. Otter Creek Communications Union District Report and Municipal Planning Grant Report- Jessica Van Oort:**

Jessica reported that the Otter Creek governing board met last week and discussed some build out north of the Rutland area. Our area will be addressed some time next year. Prior to the work spokes people will come out to the various towns. Frank suggested tying the sewer rates to the highspeed internet costs so that the group of individuals could act as a sort of co-op group to potentially lower rates. Jessica said that there will be one free hotspot for each town and she thought that West Pawlet center should be the one since it is currently a rather poor signal. She explained the free hot spot has to be for public use. As for homeowners: if 500 feet or less from the pole (most of the buildout will be via existing poles) then the homeowner will have to pick up any additional cost for the highspeed internet installation. Jessica was going to check on whether there would be a free hotspot for both Pawlet and West Pawlet or just one per township. Harley noted that fiber will only be coming through West Pawlet anyway since Pawlet already has high speed internet.

Frank spoke on the energy report, that there was a community solar project that the selectboard voted down. He said Merp (Municipal Energy Resilience Program) reported that the assessment for the town on both the library and town hall was not done very well and was missing many things. Using the flur camera it was noted that both buildings had glaring heat loss through all the windows. Frank said that the money allowed for alterations could be as high as \$500,000.

Jessica commented on Act 133 which has to do with various boards on municipal level and open meeting law and whether they need to record proceedings. She handed around a copy of a correspondence with VLCT regarding whether Pawlet is subject to the new recording laws. July 1<sup>st</sup> the new laws go into effect. It sounds like the PPC is in compliance with the new law but Frank offered to follow up with VLCT on this matter to see if the PPC needs to start recording their meetings or not.

**Item 7. Public comments:**

Hillary Solomon from the Mettowee Conservation district spoke about the Mettowee and Flower Brook and storm water run off into them. Over the years a lot of testing has been done in the Flower brook water shed and has identified several problems. Now there is more funding available from the state to reduce Phosphorous load eventually heading to Lake Champlain. This funding can be used to deal with some of the problems identified over the years. The Conservation District is also doing some new assessments further up the headwaters. Some effort on keeping the sediment further upstream which will force any flood waters to access the flood plains further up stream there by reducing the mass of potential water that empties into the Mettowee and Flower Brook in the down town. Jessica asked about the timeline for funding. Hillary said the funding was available now, but a bunch of criteria have been added by the state. Hillary said the Conservation District is eager to work with anyone in the area identifying a stream problem.

**Item 8. On-going Business:**

The committee returned to the enhanced energy plan. Jessica asked the group what the consensus was on where to go with the plan as it currently stands. The Commission had left off regarding the exact placement of alternative energy generation. Jessica was going to go back over past minutes to see exactly where the commission left off on the issue of making maps that indicate exact locations in town where we don't want energy generation and whether such a map would be acceptable to the state.

Frank moved to record the Zoom meeting (for the upcoming hearing on repeal of bylaws and also adoption of revised bylaws (two separate meetings on same night)) on Jessica's computer and send to Sean Ruck to post online so as to be in compliance with the open meeting laws coming into effect. Gary seconded and all approved, motion passed.

**Item 9. Set Agenda for next meeting**

Call to Order 7:30 2. Approval of Agenda Items - Review/Add/Delete 7:31 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting 7:33 4. Zoning Administrator's Report – Nancy Morlino 7:35 5. Rutland Regional Planning Commission Report 7:40 6. Otter Creek Communications Union District Report and Municipal Planning Grant report 7:45 7. Public Comments 7:50 8. On-going Business: Bylaws Updates continued 8:00 9. Set Agenda for the next meeting 8:55 10. Adjournment 9:00

**Item 11. Adjournment:**

Gary moved to adjourn and Mark seconded, all approved, meeting adjourned at 8:45p