

**Town of Charlton
Saratoga County
Town Board Agenda Meeting**

December 27, 2011

The Agenda meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Charlton, Saratoga County, New York was held at the Charlton Town Hall and called to order by Supervisor Grattidge at 7:30 p.m. to set the agenda for the January 9th Town Board Meeting.

Present: Councilman Gardner, Councilman Lippiello, Councilman Salisbury, Councilman Verola, Supervisor Grattidge, Town Clerk Brenda Mills, Attorney Van Vranken

APPROVAL OF ABSTRACT

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Salisbury to accept General Fund claim numbers 816- 856 as set forth in Abstract #124 in the amount of \$255,059.24 and General Fund Claim numbers 1009 – 1016 as set forth in Abstract #9912 in the amount of \$2,050.35.

Discussion: The Abstract #124 contained voucher #830 in the amount of \$475.33 from Historian Laura Linder for the reimbursement for the purchase of an inkjet printer, color ink cartridges and photo paper. Councilman Gardner asked if any Board members had authorized the purchase. No one had. Councilman Verola suggested that it might be more cost effective and better quality to have the pictures developed by an online developing company. Councilman Lippiello said that the Technology Advisory Committee should have been consulted before the purchase.

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Verola to remove Voucher #830 from Abstract 124 and proceed with the abstract in the amount of \$255,059.24.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays. CARRIED

Councilman Salisbury said that he had noticed the Highway Superintendent, Mike Emerich, had not submitted any vouchers for payment. He called Mr. Emerich and Mr. Emerich said that he was told by the Bookkeeper not to submit vouchers. Supervisor Grattidge said that Mr. Emerich was asked by the Bookkeeper if he had any vouchers that needed to be paid this year. Mr. Emerich said no. This has been an ongoing problem, but he was not told by the Bookkeeper not to submit vouchers. Supervisor Grattidge said that Mr. Emerich has repeatedly been late with his vouchers. Mr. Emerich has been talked to numerous times about getting the bills in on time because it gives the Town a bad reputation and many vendors do not want to extend credit to the Town. Councilmen Gardner and Salisbury said that bills need to be turned in monthly. Councilman Gardner said that no one on the Board is telling him not to submit vouchers. Supervisor Grattidge said that was correct. Supervisor Grattidge said that the only reason that he was told to hold off on the last couple of bills was the concern that if there was a snow storm and there was overtime generated, that would go over the payroll money that was left. Councilman Salisbury said that they should have been paid and money should have been transferred funds from the administrative funds to cover them. Councilman Verola said that Mr. Emerich needs to understand that being the Highway Superintendent doesn't involve just going out and doing the roads. He is responsible for doing the paperwork. That is what the Highway Superintendent is supposed to do. She will speak to Mr. Emerich again.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Gardner to accept the meeting minutes from the Town Board Meeting on December 12, 2011.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays. CARRIED

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town offices will be closed December 31st and January 2nd for the New Year holiday.

The Organizational Meeting will be held January 3rd at 7pm.

DISCUSSION

The Sales Tax for the month was \$88,758.00 and the Mortgage Tax was \$21,143.50.

Kim Caron has become a State Certified Assessor. Congratulations were given by the Supervisor.

Saratoga County has adopted a Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, and is asking the Towns to adopt the same plan.

The Town has been contacted regarding the Saratoga County program to honor deceased Veterans. Supervisor Grattidge has asked the Historian's office to decide on the Charlton Veteran and do a write-up on the person.

DEC has sent a reminder to the Town that the 2010 NYS Dishwasher Detergent and Nutrient Runoff Law goes into effect January 1, 2012. The law covers the sale and use of fertilizers containing phosphorus. The Town Clerk will post the notice on the bulletin board and website.

Attorney Van Vranken sent the Town Board a copy of an agreement to be signed with the Charlton Snowmobile Club, which will allow club members to park in the back of the Town Hall parking lot to load and unload their snowmobiles and access the adjoining trail. Attorney Van Vranken has a copy of their insurance certificate, and he needs to have a few minor changes made to it.

The Town has received notification from Time Warner saying that there will be a basic rate increase.

Garth Ellms has notified the Town that he is working with the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce Tourism Bureau on a fundraiser for the Fallen Firefighter Organization. He will be putting together a 5k race to be held September 9th and 10th.

Supervisor Grattidge said that there will be a cash flow situation in January for Highway Department expenses. The two options are 1): The Board could use the sales tax received in January to cover the expenses and then recoup the money from the Highway funds during the year, or 2): transfer the monies needed from the General Fund to cover the expenses. The consensus of the Board was to do a transfer from the General Fund.

MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Lippiello that Resolution No. 167 – A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-1990.4-CONTINGENCY TO A-1650.4 CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS-CONTRACTUAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$415.00 FOR ADDITIONAL COST OF TELEPHONE & INTERNET be approved

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Verola that Resolution No. 168 – A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-1990.4-CONTINGENCY TO A-1440.4-ENGINEERING SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$506.00 FOR ADDITIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Gardner that Resolution No. 169 – A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-1990.4-CONTINGENCY TO A-1620.411-BUILDINGS-OTHER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$22.00 FOR ADDITIONAL TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Salisbury that Resolution No. 170 – A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-1620.1-BUILDINGS TO A-1620.420-BUILDINGS-HEATING/ELECTRICITY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,268.00 FOR ADDITIONAL COST OF PROPANE be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Lippiello that Resolution No. 171 – A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR THE BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-9010.8-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS-STATE RETIREMENT TO A-9060.8 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS-HEALTH INSURANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$579.00, FOR ADDITIONAL COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE & SOCIAL SECURITY REIMBURSEMENTS FOR THE MORGANS be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Gardner that Resolution No. 172 - A BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BUDGET YEAR 2011 FROM A-3120.411-CONSTABLES-OTHER TO A-3120.413-CONSTABLES-VEHICLE MAINTENANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$119.00 FOR ADDITIONAL COST OF CONSTABLE'S VEHICLE MAINTENANCE be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Lippiello that Resolution No. 173 – A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERVISOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CHARLTON SNOWMOBILE CLUB FOR THE 2011/2012 SNOWMOBILE YEAR be approved.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye. CARRIED

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

Councilman Gardner read Resolution #85 from May 2010 that authorized the Supervisor to purchase the Williamson Law Accounting Software program.

A **motion** was made by Councilman Verola and seconded by Councilman Gardner to have the Town implement the Williamson Law Accounting Software.

Verbatim Discussion (at the request of the Town Board):

Grattidge: Point of order, resolutions need to be brought before the Board 48 hours before they can be voted on.

Verola: This has been a year and a half Alan.

Grattidge: This software was put in place, it was found to be much less efficient than the software that we are currently using. At that time of the switching over, the areas of concern were such that I did not feel that it was prudent to continue using the software. I fully informed the Board, the Board met with the 2 people that use the software, a full discussion was held, and at that time we determined that we request a refund from Williamson Software.

Gardner: Stop. I do

Grattidge: I am in

Gardner: Stop.

Grattidge: I am in

Gardner: Stop. Stop. That is not true

Grattidge: Excuse me. I have the floor. I was in the process, I am in the process of getting a refund from Williamson Software.

Gardner: Can I have the floor now?

Grattidge: Go Ahead.

Gardner: There were a number of emails that flowed back and forth between you and Williamson, different parties there, starting off with a Kathy Sarnoff and then it came down to Ted Jones. I was aware of some of these emails, I was aware of the uh, the um, uh list of issues that were brought forth by both our Town Clerk and the Secretary to the Supervisor. In reading those emails the company reached out to us, they offered help, they responded at least to what I could see, I never really got a copy of this except through Councilman Verola, a response from Ted Jones to all of the Supervisor's Secretary's questions, I took it upon myself to go with Doug Salisbury to Warrensburg to look at the system. I can't tell you the exact time that we did it. Brought forth some of the issues that were on those uh on those uh issue lists, and these people were dumbfounded that there was an issue here. I really think that maybe, I misunderstand that I don't really run this Town. I got elected to run the Town and I don't run it. I mean there are other people that run the Town. Because its, we passed this resolution, we told the residents that this was going to be a great improvement for them, you know, this, the uh..

Grattidge: What improvements are you looking for Mr. Gardner?

Gardner: Well, I don't know. I mean...

Grattidge: I told you at the time that I would be more than happy to generate any report that you thought that our software wasn't generating and that was agreeable.

Gardner: I am not talking...

Grattidge: One of the discussion points that we had earlier this year was that when we asked the Comptrollers Department to come in, we would have them evaluate our software.

Gardner: Whoa, whoa, whoa.

Grattidge: They not only evaluated our software, they felt that our software was much superior to the Williamson.

Verola: I don't think that the State Comptroller evaluates software, Alan.

Grattidge: Absolutely they do.

Verola: I totally disagree with that because I have tried in the past to have them give me an evaluation of different softwares and they won't do it. They won't endorse any software. They applauded us for our internal controls, but the internal controls were put in place by us, not by the software. We are responsible for the internal controls.

Grattidge: Tell me what do you feel you are missing in our software?

Verola: I would

Grattidge: Tell me exactly what you want out of our software.

Verola: Well all right. The reports for one.

Grattidge: What reports?

Verola: The reports that we are given, the monthly reports that we are given. I think that the Williamson Law reports are more, more easily understandable, I think they are clearer. I think they are better reports. I have thought that since Heather, we looked at it with Heather. I have always liked the Williamson. I myself made a trip to Warrensburg, and the reason that I chose Warrensburg is because they used the use the software program that we are using now.

Grattidge: In 1993, that's the last time that they used Maps.

Verola: I have the floor. And they switched to the Williamson Law and they are very happy with it. The Town Clerk is happy with it, the Town Supervisor is happy with it, the Bookkeeper is happy with it and the Secretary to the Supervisor is happy with it. They do everything with it. The only thing they didn't like about it was the water, they didn't like the water billing program with the Williamson. I took the complaints from the Bookkeeper and the Town Clerk, they both read them over. Their comments to me was they don't understand.

Grattidge: Again that's Warrensburg.

Verola: It's a Town that is comparable in size to the Town of Charlton, except it has a Water District of 2900 customers, we have 5 or 600 customers. I don't understand why we are spending \$15,323 on a program back in 2010 and we are still not using it.

Lippiello: I think that you brought up, you used a very good expression. The Town Clerk was happy with it, the Bookkeeper was happy with it, the Supervisor was happy with it because they are the people that work with it. And that is who needs to be satisfied with the system.

Verola: Yah but you can't... unless you are trained, and we have not been trained, unless you are trained, how do you know that you are not happy with it. They used to use our system.

Grattidge: Back in 1993.

Gardner: I don't know what the date is on it Alan.

Grattidge: They haven't used it since 93.

Gardner: The current Supervisor that is office now

Grattidge: I don't want to hear about Warrensburg. I don't care about Warrensburg.

Gardner: Well I care about a resolution that we passed unanimously as a Board and we have not used.

Grattidge: And we put it in and installed it and as we started to use it, we saw the flaws that were in this system was going to take us backwards. And the people that were using it came forward and brought forward examples of why the Williamson was not going to be as effective as what we already have. I requested a refund, Williamson is willing to work with us on a refund. I am in the process of getting a refund of our money from Williamson less the expenses that they generated when they came down. The system has been

Verola: There is a motion on the floor and it has been seconded.

Grattidge: The system has been uninstalled and it is not even in our computer system.

Verola: There is a motion on the floor and there is a second.

Grattidge: The motion is out of order.

Verola: and there is a second. The motion is not out of order.

Grattidge: It's out of order.

Verola: No its not.

Grattidge: It's out of order by our procedures by how we rule our....

Verola: This resolution is a year and a half old, Alan, don't come up with this 24 hour stuff.

Grattidge: The resolution was implemented and at the time we found deficiencies enough to warrant going back to our other software. I am more than willing to work with the Board if you want different reports if there are different illustrations that you need, I am more than willing to produce those for you.

Gardner: Why do we not take advantage of the company that we purchased this from? They offered to come in. Everything that I can read in any of the few communications that I received...

Grattidge: Because you, we can not change the structure of their software. Their software is built into different modules that do not communicate with each other.

Gardner: That is not true. We found out today...

Grattidge: Warrensburg is not using the Town Clerk module.

Verola: Yes they are.

Grattidge: They have the full accounting system set up...

Gardner: That's right.

Grattidge: They have the full accounting system set up in both offices. And you specifically said that you didn't want to do that.

Gardner: Well, the package that is loaded on your computer, if the Town Clerk had that, she would be able to go, be working, just like Warrensburg or anyone else using the system. This came about, I'm not sure, I heard about it the first time today. I heard that what our Town Clerk had installed on her computer was not able to easily, it can work back and forth with the accounting program, but not easily, but it can be rectified with just a small change. I do not understand why if we had brought the people in here today way back in last year in February or whenever, most of their problems would be gone. You can not bring in a system such as this without a plan, training, points of contact, making everybody feel warm and cozy about it or its going to fail. Nobody, its just different.

Verola: And they did offer to come in and train. They made that offer.

Gardner: I mean, we in good faith took \$15,000 in a grant, we spent the money, it's not our money. It's the State of New York's money.

Verola: Its taxpayer money.

Gardner: And again, I want to clear the air, when those discussions were going on upstairs when we were signing vouchers and they were presented to us. I wasn't in agreement, that we were at any time, I wanted to try to investigate, to talk, to find as much knowledge as I could get.

Verola: It wasn't a discussion. We were being told.

Lippiello: What are you referring to?

Verola: We were referring to a meeting that we had upstairs, when we were being told how bad the Williamson system was. You don't remember?

Lippiello: Okay, I didn't know what you were referring to.

Verola: I still say that there is a motion on the floor and a second.

Gardner: This isn't the first or the last time that something has come up.

Grattidge: The responsibility of the software of the accounting system by Town Law says that it has to meet the requirements of the Audit and Control Division, which ours does. Again, I have been more than willing to work with the Board, to provide whatever information that you would like. I am seeking a refund from Williamson, the system has been uninstalled.

Verola: Who authorized it to be uninstalled? I didn't know that it was uninstalled?

Grattidge: If it wasn't being used, you don't want it sitting on your server.

Verola: Well, someone should have told me or told the rest of the Board it was being uninstalled. I had no knowledge of this. I thought it was running.

Grattidge: It was uninstalled and you were well aware that we were going to seek a refund. I made that clear when we had our discussions. Doug sat there and said that if Williamson won't do a bank reconciliation, what good is it. The day we had our discussion

Salisbury: We have not... You brought my name into this thing?

Grattidge: Yup

Salisbury: That program has not even been used. They couldn't even come up with a decision in a week's time on whether that program is any good or not.

Grattidge: It was 2 abstracts that we ran through it.

Verola: Can that program do a bank reconciliation?

Salisbury: How do we know, I don't know, I couldn't tell you.

Grattidge: No, it didn't have it in it.

Salisbury: I can't believe it doesn't have it.

Verola: I can't believe it either. I never heard of a software program without it. Quickbooks has it.

Grattidge: That came up in the meeting.

Salisbury: Maybe we had a discussion about whether it could do it. I do not know to this day what this program can do. The people that were supposed to be using it haven't got a clue because they have not given it a chance. Don't put words in my mouth that I said that because I didn't say that.

Verola: Is it in the minutes that he said that.

Salisbury: We don't take minutes at certain meetings, that is why this stuff gets so screwed up.

Gardner: I guess I go back to the original premise, Resolution #85 was passed on May 10th, this Board in its entirety agreed to purchase this system, understanding that we had looked at this system and sat right in this room with the finance people, the tech people, 2 vendors, they presented their cases. We waited, a decision was made to purchase the Williamson system. We passed a resolution to spend \$15,000 for it, and what do we have? We are 19 months later and really that is not fair because we did not plan to start it until 2011.

Williamson loaded in the 2011 budget, we did one abstract and a whole bunch issued came up, but I was here on a couple of occasions trying to make contact with Williamson only to find a firewall because they did not want to get in the middle of a battle, a political type battle between the Board members and the Supervisor's office and stuff like that.

Verola: And why they thought that it was a political battle is beyond me.

Gardner: Right. So my avenue to have any dialogue about this got shut down. So I am sitting here as a Board member, wondering, I just passed this. I just spent \$15,000 and I don't that lightly. And I have tried different means to get this going and it has not happened. So what are we going to do? We have a motion on the floor.

Verola: And a second.

Grattidge: That resolution was implemented, it was put in place and the software was found not to function properly.

Verola: But the Town Board never authorized this to be uninstalled.

Gardner: You show me a resolution numbered something that says be it resolved that the Town Board

Grattidge: I let the Town Board fully know at the time when we were switching back to our former software the reasons why we were. I had the meeting where the Town Clerk and the bookkeeper came in and talk to you.

Verola: Was there a vote on it Alan?

Grattidge: No, because you guys all said well that's your problem Alan. It's your software.

Verola: I never said that.

Grattidge: Yah

Gardner: I never said that either.

Grattidge: I guess that was in those minutes too.

Gardner: In fact, I remember sitting right in these chambers and suggesting that we not muddy up the water, that we set one person and I recommended Doug Salisbury because of his accounting background and his interaction with a number of county programs to be the liaison with the Town Clerk and it turned into a very intense situation. I remember.

Grattidge: At the end of the day, what reports would the Board like the software to produce? What are you looking for, a change in how our annual report come out, our

Verola: Did you read the report by Keith Fitzgerald who happens to be a CPA and also designs

Grattidge: 10 years ago, yes I read that report.

Verola: What's changed?

Salisbury: It's still true today what is in that report.

Verola: Yes, nothing has changed.

Gardner: Did you listen to the Tech Committee? Did you listen to the other Finance members and what they were saying?

Grattidge: The people that are working with this software came to me and told me of the problems that they were having with the Williamson. I expressed that to the Board members. I said to subject the people that have to work with this system, to what now we are going to have to do, is taking a huge step backwards. I have asked Williamson for a refund and they have agreed to give us a refund. We can certainly go to the 2nd vendor and implement the money through that software. Our software and BAS are now working together and we can blend into their software as Bob Martensen gets out of the business.

Gardner: Why would we do this, when we voted for a resolution that didn't happen.

Grattidge: It happened Bruce.

Gardner: Let me ask a question. Why when the things that started to happen with the 2 individuals, why was not some initiative taken to bring Williamson in here. I saw the communications I saw the emails.

Grattidge: They were. They said that their software couldn't do that. Their software couldn't perform what we asked them to do.

Gardner: Excuse me, I went and watched.

Grattidge: Yah but you weren't watching the Clerk's software because that is written by another guy than the accounting software that doesn't talk to each other. Then these guys were going to be passing thumb drives back and forth to each other.

Gardner: It doesn't have to be that way, that can be fixed.

Verola: That's because the licensing, there was 2 licenses granted. One should have been granted to the Town Clerk and one to the bookkeeper. What we did was licensed you and the bookkeeper. The problem with that is that you should be able to go into the bookkeeper's office and look at the software any time that you want, and Brenda should be licensed for the bookkeeping software, not you. Because you and the bookkeeper are the same.

Lippiello: But the Town Clerk was also excluded from the accounting program.

Verola: She was, she shouldn't have been.

Gardner: She shouldn't have been.

Lippiello: But she was, that was our decision.

Verola: It was the wrong decision.

Lippiello: My question, we have continued to live with our former program for 11 months, what stimulated this again, review of this and insistence that it be the program that we live with?

Gardner: another year goes by when we are not executing the resolution that this Board voted on and brought to life.

Verola: \$15,000 and a couple of trips to Warrensburg.

Gardner: If you do these and you don't execute them

Lippiello: It was executed and it was in place. It was tried, and it was found to be inefficient.

Gardner: Bob, I am sorry but I have been in this arena my entire life, with systems, all kinds of systems, implementations, endless. You just don't bring it in and it happens. You bring it in, a plan is there, and the people have to work with it to make it happen.

Verola; And get trained.

Gardner: And get trained. And get through the hurdles that are there with trying to bring the system on line. Is it the absolute best? I don't know. That is not the question. We chose this after other people recommended it in a sense to this Board. We as a Board executed our duties, and we passed this resolution. In passing this resolution we either have to execute it and honor it or we rescind it.

Grattidge; It was executed and honored.

Gardner: I mean, if I buy a car and I take it out for a ride...

Grattidge: It is called a lemon law.

Verola: This is not a lemon.

Gardner: It's not a lemon.

Grattidge: That is why we did it in the first 30 days.

Verola: This system is used by multiple municipalities. It's not just used by us. Other municipalities use it, work with it and love it. We didn't even give it a chance and we spent \$15,323 on it.

Gardner: And I don't mean this in a disrespectful way, the one person and she is sitting at this dais, that should be upset is the Town clerk because in many ways she was not even involved. And after watching and looking at our municipal accounting system, she does the lion's share of the lifting, getting the abstract done and making sure that the bills and the controls are in place so that the public's money is well protected. And she wasn't even, I mean I don't remember Brenda even being a part of the meeting that we were having about the software. It was all about the journals, entries and that and nothing on the other end. So I can understand Brenda's concern with being thrown in, and she was the only one that didn't have any face to face training. Hers was done over the phone, and then in one of her emails, she said that she could make it work. And not only

that, we found out that after she talked to Warrensburg that she can make it work better because she knows things now that she didn't know before

Grattidge: Okay Bruce, Brenda has not had an opportunity to speak. I have asked her in the past. Brenda when you look at this system that we have and you compare it to what you saw when we put Williamson in, what was your evaluation, just as somebody that has knowledge of accounting software. Brenda.

Mills: I have not seen the accounting end of the software. It did come to my attention last week in talking to Warrensburg that I don't have the same software that Warrensburg is using. Warrensburg does not use Williamson for the Town Clerks Office, which I do use, and I prepare the abstract through that software. It's not the same software that the bookkeeper is using. So in Warrensburg, what the Town Clerk actually has is 2 software programs. She has the Town software which is the Williamson and she has the Town Clerk software which is BAS. She prepares the abstract or enters the vouchers into the Williamson accounting software, not the Town Clerk software. So the program is different. The one advantage of doing it that way is that we no longer have to import and export constantly for Kathy and I to communicate between 2 different programs. It would be in the same program. My feelings originally were that it wasn't as good as what we currently have, it is more cumbersome to enter vouchers, I still think it is, however, the girl at Warrensburg's screen is different than what I am seeing, so I don't honestly know if it is actually better, at this point. She can do some things that I can't do. But it did seem like it is more cumbersome. Williamson does have a separate program for every single part of their accounting program, and that makes it difficult. It's not typical for any kind of a network program for you to have to call a separate programmer for each module. The reason that we originally dropped Williamson is because Kathy and I were called into a very uncomfortable meeting with the Board upstairs and were told basically it didn't matter if we like it or not, we were going to use it, but when it came out that the program did not have a bank reconciliation, Councilman Salisbury said if it doesn't have a bank reconciliation, then it is worthless. You don't have to use it. That was the end of the subject. Does it have a bank reconciliation? I don't know. Warrensburg thinks that possibly it does, but she doesn't know and the bookkeeper is on vacation.

Grattidge: But originally when you first approached me, and you approached me before Kathy approached me. Your concerns were that this was a step backwards.

Mills: Well absolutely it was when she told me that I had to copy everything to a flash drive and give it to her and if changes have to be made then she had to copy it back to the flash drive and give it to me. That's baloney.

Verola: But wasn't that because you are not licensed?

Mills: Well, I called Williamson and said that doesn't make sense to me. Why copy to a flash drive? Why not copy to network drive that we both share, and they said, oh sure, you can do that. It is still more cumbersome than using the MAPS program.

Grattidge: But as you entered information in our current system, it goes throughout our whole system, no matter what account you are taking in and out of. From what I understand with Williamson, you've got to close out of each account as you are trying to put something in, and when you have split accounts, you are opening and closing these accounts, where with ours, it's all integrated into it. And again, it was something that struck me as taking a step backwards. We were going to be, you know, losing a lot of our efficiencies.

Mills: I did not like the voucher edit reports that Williamson spit out. It gave me a separate sheet for every fund letter instead of giving me the total of the vouchers. I want to proof the vouchers that I entered against the report to see if I have entered it correctly, but I couldn't do that with the Williamson because if it was a voucher like this one that has 3 different accounts, it would be on 3 different pages.

Gardner; Brenda, I think that we have seen that. They called it unedited abstract. They have a different name for it. And I think that that same thing comes out of you having the accounting program. The thing that went wrong here is there wasn't enough dialogue and exchange going on between the vendor that is supplying the software and the people using it. If it had gone on, we probably wouldn't be where we are. You didn't now.

Mills: Well shame on everybody in this room. Because truthfully, the relationship between the bookkeeper and I is not good, so there is not good communication. The relationship between all 5 of you guys is not good, so nobody is communicating well, and that pissed off Williamson. Excuse me. And they don't want to deal with us anymore. So we have all got to get on the same page about this and we all have to work together.

Gardner: That is what I sensed too. That's not good. When a major vendor doesn't want to deal with us, that's not good.

Verola: Not good.

Grattidge: Yes, we can recover the money that we can. We can certainly look at BAS, as they get more into accounting. As Bob Martensen gets out, switching into a BAS accounting system. They have already set up a contractual relationship for the fear that if Bob, something were to happen to Bob, there would be nobody there. They already have that relationship cemented. So I am not seeing the worries that we had originally as to who is going to handle our software. I offered before that if there are some other reports that you guys would like to see, if there is items that we should have a better handle on, I am more than willing to work with the Board to try to come up with those types of reports that would help you understand where we are with those things. Again, I asked the Comptroller's office specifically when Clarissa came here to look at our software and evaluate what

you see, will you tell me as a party that looks at software day in and day out, how you evaluate this. I told her who the other vendor was. Yah, you are right, she can't make an official statement, but she can certainly tell you that she thinks that what she sees in our software is superior to what they see in Williamson.

Verola: She told you that?

Grattidge: yes, she did.

Verola: The State Comptroller's office told you that?

Grattidge: Clarissa told me when I asked her specifically.

Verola: Who?

Grattidge: Clarissa, the girl that came and did our examining.

Gardner: I find that very queer.

Grattidge: She did. It is something that I had talked to Bruce about early in the spring. Ask for this risk assessment, have the Comptroller's office come in. If you have a number of deficiencies that you have in our software, point them out to the Comptroller's office, and let's hear from them if we have a software that meets the requirements of the State and does a good job. And she did.

Verola: Quickbooks would meet the requirements of the State, Alan. The requirements of the State they are not, they are not that stringent.

Grattidge: Prove it.

Verola: No they are not. They are basic bookkeeping requirements.

Grattidge: I still don't understand what you think we are going to gain out of Williamson that we are not already having now and what we couldn't do for you to produce what you want to see. I still, I always have trouble understanding what you think we are missing out of our software.

Verola: When, when, when it was recommended to us by the Bookkeeper, that we buy the Williamson, what was it that she saw that she didn't like in the BAS? Other than the fact that BAS was brand new and we would have been the guinea pigs.

Grattidge: Then, one of the concerns was what was going to happen with Bob Martensen if something happened to him.

Verola: But Williamson has been around forever.

Gardner: It sounds like there is an underlying thing going on here, where there is this stopgap measure taken to buy time to get something to go with, am I, am I reading this wrong, what am, am I hearing this right?

Grattidge: No. again BAS.

Gardner: Do we have a, there is a motive here to get with BAS versus Williamson?

Grattidge: At the time when you compared the 2, the Williamson looked like a better package compared to the BAS because BAS hadn't been in the accounting business. But they were also at the time starting to enter into a contractual agreement with Bob to bring some of his technology into their software.

Verola: So now we are going to have Bob Martensen's software system instead of BAS, and call it BAS? Is that what is happening?

Grattidge: The agreement that they have though, is that if something were to happen to Bob Martensen, BAS would support his software.

Lippiello: Which wasn't there before.

Grattidge: Right, which wasn't there before.

Gardner: I realize that, and all of that is fine but it doesn't take away from what we have done. In that we had a false start and we did not follow through effectively. We didn't support, and I feel, I feel, I feel that I, I will be quite honest with you. I failed in getting this done, what we set out to do in getting a change in our software system.

Verola: And all of our Boards who looked at this. The finance committee, the technology advisory board. They all recommended that we get this system.

Grattidge: We put it in place, it didn't function as efficiently as what we currently have now.

Lippiello: The problem is that you have to have your hands on it before you can fully say, does it really do what I need it to do?

Verola: When we bought this system, the Bookkeeper was given disks to take home to review and see whether or not she liked the system. She called me. She took them home on a Friday and looked at them over the weekend, called me up and said, I don't like the BAS, I want to go with the Williamson.

Grattidge: When we were looking at those 2 things that was

Lippiello: That was their advertising products unfortunately.

Verola: Well she liked it.

Lippiello: I know, and so did the tech board and the financial board. We made a mistake.

Verola: Yes they all liked it.

Gardner: I don't know that, I do not know that we made a mistake because I don't know enough about it.

Grattidge: I think if it was as easy as what you thought Bruce, I don't think that Brenda and Kathy would have come to me with the concerns that they had. They certainly wouldn't have wanted to come up and sit in the

room and get grilled by the Town Board on why they couldn't make this software work. They were very honest and open with the problems that we were having. At the time the plan was to go back to our MAPS and ask Williamson for a refund and that is where we are in this process.

Verola: We were not grilling them. They sat up there and they told us why it didn't work.

Gardner: Why they believed it didn't work.

Verola: I certainly didn't have any questions to ask.

Gardner: I mean how can we be objective about it, when we don't know that much about it. I mean, the doubt coming from that would have been to bring Williamson in here, all their horsepower, say we need you to sit down with us, we got problems. And these problems are whatever they are, and sit with them, and the people involved and iron them out. We didn't do that. And then all the, all the, all the, all the avenues of contact started to tighten up. And all of the sudden we couldn't have any contact. It was like we were going to be in a lawsuit or something. I don't know. I mean, I called Ted just to ask him some questions on something. He didn't want to talk to me. He said talk to the Supervisor, we only deal with the Supervisor.

Verola: He thinks this is all politics. Baloney, it's not politics. It's trying to run the Town efficiently. It has nothing to do with politics.

Grattidge: I still don't understand where you are saying that we are not efficient.

Verola: I don't understand why, BAS will never ever, they will never be where Williamson is because they are an upstart company. Williamson has been around forever. How can BAS be superior to Williamson?

Grattidge: I guess, Sandy, if you are not the one using the system, it's hard to make those kind of generalizations.

Verola: I do use a bookkeeping system Alan. And when I first started using my bookkeeping system, I was resistant to use it too, until I got trained on it, and now I am very comfortable. In a couple of weeks, before you know it, you are using it, and you don't know how you did without it. But you have got to get trained, you have got to get used to it. It's not something that you can just bing bing bing and a couple of weeks say okay, it's not the way that it works. And no software system is perfect, there is no such thing as a perfect software system. There is always going to be glitches in it, just like there is in this MAPS program.

Gardner: And then this concern about Williamson not being responsive. I talked with 4 people up there, and not one of them, and they had an opportunity, they had no reason not to say that there were. They said you call and they get back to you, they get back to you. Though they don't pick up the phone and talk right to you. You may have to leave a message. They might pick up the phone and say you are number 4 or I will call you right back. They are there.

Verola: They get back to you that day. When you are waiting for them to get back to you, you go on to do other things. It's not like there is nothing else to do. You are not just sitting there waiting for them to call.

Gardner: So again, I, I, I, I, I, I feel, I feel that we, we got to have a direction here. We, we have this, we have this resolution from this Board and, and, and we purchased this piece of software, we gave it one abstract start, 2, 2 abstract start. The questions that were raised, some were answered in writing, but never in person. I think that could have been done and handled. And I, and I feel, and I would encourage the Board to support a restart of this thing and give it a try. If it fails because we haven't done due diligence to get people in here to train, then fine. but to just throw this away because you know, because we as a Board didn't thrust enough energy and support into it to make it happen, then shame on us.

Grattidge: Well, again the Board's roles and duties of actually handling the software system is very limited. It doesn't fall into that area. So it's easy for you to say, oh you will be fine with it, go ahead, just get a little bit of training. Again, when we sat down and talked to the people that were using it, there were problems. There was efficiency problems, there was design problems, and it was going backwards. You were aware that I was asking for a refund, they have agreed to a refund. We are just now haggling over what they are going to take out for their expenses.

Gardner: So when were we going to approve you to go for this refund? When was that going to take place? When were we going to rescind this purchase of this Williamson system? I mean, when were these things going to happen?

Verola: And what happens to the money? Do we give it back to the State?

Grattidge: We can decide once we get it back. There isn't any sense in deciding what to do until we get it back.

Verola: I would think that the State would have something to say about that and I am shocked that they have not been in here to audit what we did with that grant.

Gardner: I think, I think it's really done a disservice that we haven't more thoroughly, effectively brought this project to a successful end. Again there is a motion on the floor and seconded, to make it happen.

Grattidge: Anything else.

Verola: I think we need to vote on the motion.

Grattidge: There is no motion on the floor.

Verola: There is a motion on the floor.

Grattidge: The resolution was implemented, it was executed and the product was deemed inferior.

Verola: Our Attorney?

Van Vranken: There is a motion on the floor that has been seconded.

Mills: Can I ask who it seconded it, I am sorry I did not hear that.

Verola: I made the motion and Bruce seconded it.

Grattidge: No, Bruce made the motion. I don't even know what the motion is.

Verola: I made the motion that the resolution of May 10th, 2010, resolution number 85, that it be implemented immediately.

Grattidge: Any further discussion? Roll call.

Roll Call: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Nay, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman

Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Nay. CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Mills
Town Clerk