

**Official- Town of Montezuma Board  
Monthly Town Board Meeting  
November 19th, 2024 6pm**

Supervisor David Corey opened the meeting, followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members Present:**

**Town Supervisor:** David Corey  
**Deputy Supervisor/Councilman:** Thomas Hitchcock Jr.  
**Councilman:** Thomas Fitzsimmons  
**Councilman:** Chirstopher Howard  
**Councilman:** Marvin King

**Town Officials Present:**

**Town Clerk:** Marie Cronin  
**Deputy Town Clerk:** Tiffini Sharp  
**Historian:** Cheryl Longyear  
**Highway Superintendent:** Kenneth Cook  
**Deputy Superintendent:** David Ware  
**Water Operator:** Stanley Longyear  
**Codes Enforcement Office:** John Greer  
**Dog Warden (2025):** Suzie Tracy

**Other Attendees:** Jared Heinl (Beardsley architects & engineers), Bill Stewart (Refuge), Noah Willard (Barton Loguidice), Kathy Decker, Jim Decker, Kevin Cox (Town Lawyer)

Code Enforcement Officer John Greer reported he issued one permit in October 2024. The condemned house on Route 31 has perished by fire, demonstrated by pictures from John Greer. No people or animals were injured. The fire started in the back of the home, the person living there was actively moving things into a trailer. An arson investigation has been opened with the Cayuga County sheriff's department. On November 18th he received a call about tires being sold at Bennett Mobile home park and there were many tires being sold. He advised the owner this was illegal and the owner stated these would be moved by the end of the week. He will follow up with this by the end of the week. Cheryl Longyear asked about animals or people being injured in the fire, nobody was injured. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about the owner of the property and they believe the property was being held with Cayuga County for back taxes. This concluded his report.

David Corey introduced Suzie Tracy as the dog control officer for 2025. She reported she has built a shelter in Moravia. She asked if anyone had any questions. The board was wondering about the fees and what they included, the fees cover the sheltering and dog control services. Vet services would cap at a cost of \$100 per year for the town's responsibility. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked if this would be given in writing and this would be provided in the contract. Cheryl Longyear would like to put this information on the website, Marie Cronin Town Clerk is going to provide that to her to do so. Suzie can also do late dog license renewal and ticket those who do not renew them. Marie stated she has sent multiple late notices that have been unreturned. Suzie states the town would only send one letter and she would send another, then ticket. This can be done via mail instead of door-to-door ticketing. She can also assist with numeration and enforce unlicensed dog ticketing. She will research licensing with any complaint

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and will require them to license the dog by the certain date before being fined. Christopher Howard inquired if the service is reactionary, Suzie stated she does not necessarily patrol the area but she will respond when complaints are called in.

Noah Willard from Barton & Loguidice, a subconsultant of Beardsley (Jared Heini) for the U.S. Fishing and Wildlife Project. His company is handling the state environment review process. This is determining if the upcoming water project will have any wetland disturbance. It passed the first phase but found additional disturbance on the second phase. He stated a water main project that buries into the ground disturbs the ground minimally, anything disturbing soil would be restored at the end of the project. Part 2 makes a small impact to erosion and physical disturbance, impact to surface water and freshwater sources, but he feels this can be mitigated throughout the construction process. There is a possibility this could cause water quality issues but it is highly unlikely. There is disturbance in the 500-year floodplain and animal habitats, including nesting and breeding, but these would be temporary impacts and restored at the end of the construction. There are also archeological areas in the construction region but disturbance will be mitigated with the construction team. There may be impact to the roads including shoulder closures, construction areas and an increase of construction vehicles on the road but this will not impact the major routes and no roads will be closed. Spill remediation will be in place to prevent any issues for human health, any spills would be immediately cleaned up by DEC protocol and there are provisions in place. Noah states the Town is the lead agency for the decision process and has the right to declare a positive or negative declaration on this project based on the report provided. Jared Heini with Beardsley stated the overall changes from the July report have shifted about 10-20 feet but the goals of the project are the same as they work to avoid concern for Route 5 & 20. Noah stated they also will be submitted to the U.S. Army engineers for the canal work. Thomas Hitchcock Jr asked how many agencies are involved in this project. Noah stated 5-6 agencies are involved. Thomas asked if they talk to each other, Noah said it depends on which wetlands are owned at a federal and state level and they all work together to sign off on the project and submit to the proper agencies. David Corey stated a resolution will need to be passed to approve it. Thomas Fitzsimmons motioned, seconded by David Corey. Motion carried 5/0 to pass the resolution as presented.

Noah also brought up a project in place to replace the Visitor Center's water issues at the Montezuma Wildlife refuge. The project manager for this project came to Beardsley and stated the water main extension work cannot be fully paid for federally as it is off of federal land. He asked if the Town of Montezuma would be willing to accept ownership of the project. Noah has discussed this originally with Thomas Fitzsimmons and David Corey. The federal government cannot administer the project since they do not own the land. The federal government would still fund the project but the Town would be responsible for bidding the project publicly. B&L would help to determine which bid is the best and this contractor would contract directly with the Town. B&L would then administer, monitor and supervise the project from there, including payments, which the Town Board would sign off on at each meeting. Noah specified the federal government would pay these invoices, not the Town. Thomas Hitchcock Jr asked if another account would be needed. Jared Heini stated it would. Christopher Howard asked what sort of liability and safeguards that the Town would need to administer this responsibility. Noah stated the Town would be given the authority to approve the work and make change demands if the work is unsatisfactory. B&L would assist with locating a new contractor should any issues arise. Christopher Howard clarified we would not be responsible for any additional funds required

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should this happen. Noah and Jared both confirmed it would not be the Town's responsibility. Thomas Hitchcock Jr confirmed B&L would ensure the contractors are qualified. Noah stated they would vet the contractors and publicly advertise for qualified bidders. B&L would provide a fulltime construction inspector on the site, recording and ensuring the project is being completed accurately. Jared stated the construction is typically a 3-month process, less than six months. Christopher asked contractually speaking, what is our authority in this project? Noah stated the Town would have total authority as the project owners. Christopher confirmed the town would be able to dismiss any contractors causing issues throughout the project, including damage to the Town property. Noah confirmed this would be the Town's authority and assured that B&L will vet the contractor bids and recommend not hiring any contractor without a satisfactory record. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked if the town would report this to B&L. Noah stated it would be both B&L and Beardsley. Jared confirmed this information as well and said the contractors will likely have several small crews. No decision is needed tonight but B&L wanted to bring this information to the Town's attention. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked if all bills would be paid through the Town Clerk's office. Noah confirmed this would be the case, once approved by the Town Board, B&L will assist with the invoicing. The Board could also have the option of giving David Corey approval to sign off on these invoices. Thomas Hitchcock JR asked if an extra meeting would be needed, Noah stated these invoices can be signed off on at the Town's monthly Board meeting. Jared stated most invoicing is done based on percentage completed, they are estimated 1.5-2 million dollars for this project. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about what is used to go underneath the river. Noah showed a map that crosses at the corner of River Rd & Route 5 and 20. The DOT did an archeological survey and found artifacts from the 1800s. To avoid disturbing this site, the project will include more drilling, with approximately 90% of the process being trenchless installation. High density poly will be used, which will not corrode and the seams will be fused to prevent any chance for leaking. The pipe will be long lasting. Christopher Howard asked how deep the pipe will be drilled into, Noah said approximately 20 ft. Noah explained how exactly that would work logistically. Christopher asked about the Historical site, Cheryl Longyear said she had the report on what was found.

Cheryl Longyear, Town Historian, gave her monthly report. Kristy LaManche has been contracted by Mike Sinninger to review pavilion plans. This was built in Pennsylvania and needs to be anchored properly to New York State code. \$500 is required to stamp the plans, which Cheryl is confirming if it will be covered by the grant. The project is supposed to be complete by December so time is of the essence. National Grid has completed the electrical updating and grounded the wiring. She attended a zoom meeting with a CNY 2025 Erie Canal Committee to coordinate the 2025 events in the area.

A map is being created to show all sites for Madison, Onondaga and Cayuga county of the canal sites. She wrote an article for publication on the replica canal boats, the Seneca Chief in Buffalo, the Lois McClure to be installed at Port Byron, and "The Montezuma" Boat that holds a Mural at the High Street trailhead at Heritage Park. The Old Mentz Heritage Center is selling a property on Pine St. This needs to be approved by the Attorney's General office and is in progress.

She wrote and submitted a grant to fund Clinton's Ditch Play. She attended meetings to create the plans with the Canal Society. This has been added to the website. She made a duplicate copy of the Mentz Church Conditions Report and had a digital copy made. She attended the Historical coalition meeting in Conquest to network with other historians, collecting

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stories about residents who worked on the canal. She continues to volunteer at the Samuel Center for Canal history.

Kenneth Cook, Highway Superintendent gave his report. The F-250 has been inspected and had ball joints, transmission lines and front seals repaired at Conquest Auto. He plans to do painting over the winter at the highway garage. Roadwork is complete for the year unless any potholes arise. The Bobcat mower that is under warranty is being processed, awaiting further details on its repair. He currently has the brush hog on it. The High Street cemetery bank has been cleared & seeded. CHIPS report should arrive by December 18th for the work completed this past Summer of 2024. All water pits are installed without issue (2 were required) and water meters are reading as they should.

Planning Board Minutes from September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 were presented by David Corey.

Tiffini Sharp presented the board with plans for the 2025 summer youth program that was requested. She began with requested funds to plan an Easter egg hunt for 2025 using the 2024 youth program funds of \$600. She researched the most cost-effective way to purchase eggs which was \$169 for 1728 eggs from Oriental trading and plans to check out candy sales after Christmas. She suggested a craft fair inside the town hall and inviting local food trucks to set up. A booth fee could be charged to offset costs and perhaps get a face painter. This would be a great way to market the youth program and give information out at this event.

She presented two options for the youth program, Option 1 being field trips. The Port Byron school district will charge \$30-40 per hour for bus use. Parents could be asked to contribute to the field trip costs, or they could be covered by the town. She has reached out to Debbie Dennis with Cayuga County to potentially seek county funding to help with costs and can follow up with that option once approval is given by the Board. Sponsorships can also be sought out. The second option would be a 2-week option. It can be made into less or more depending on interest and needs. She would like to create a committee and work with the town of Mentz and village of Port Byron as was done in the past. Cheryl Longyear asked if any interest was expressed yet, Tiffini clarified she has not reached out as she wants to have the plan approved by the Board first. She is also reached out to Jim Alberici who handles the youth employment program through Cayuga County. Cayuga County would cover the wages and insurance through this program. We would ideally use this program to staff this summer program. However, they typically run for six weeks but we could create a summer internship through the town to allow the youths to intern in different areas in the ton such as the office, the town and other areas. We also could advertise it as a two-week program and see if interest comes in. She shared the costs of each option. Marie Cronin Town Clerk stated the board would need to make a motion to formally hire Tiffini in order to create this position through civil service. Tiffini stated she would like the two-week option since we are starting early. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked what age group would be in this program. Tiffini confirmed this would likely be elementary aged children. There are around 95 children in the Montezuma Town per the last survey Cheryl Longyear provided. There are around 420 children at the elementary school at Port Byron. She based the example costs on forty children as it seems that was the estimates in previous years 2016 and before. She stated as an elementary parent herself, it would be nice to have some sort of programming locally as there is not much in this area during the summer. David Corey

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asked if this option would be a day camp, which Tiffini said Option 2 is but Option 1 would be field trips. Cheryl Longyear said the first option would be a great start and perhaps expand into Option 2 in the future. Tiffini agreed and said a youth committee would also help to determine the best option once comparing notes with other counties. Cheryl Longyear stated a lot of work seems to have gone into the research. Christopher Howard stated he likes the camp option but scheduling could be a concern, so he is thinking the field trip option could be better considering that. Tiffini agreed and said Port Byron elementary also does a summer SLAM program in July and did not want to compete with it. Marie reminded that the motion needs to be made to begin the process. The title was discussed as Youth Programs Coordinator, Recreations Director so Tiffini can plan other engaging Town events and Tiffini said she would be happy to do that. She also stated she would like to begin the process for the playground project for 2025.

David Corey suggested making a motion to set up a position to hire Tiffini Sharp as the Recreation Director. Christopher Howard made the motion, seconded by Thomas Fitzsimmons, motion carried 5/0.

Christopher Howard said he would be curious to see how other Towns do their summer programs. Tiffini stated she had researched the Weedsport program, which does a free camp from 9am-12pm, then a paid field trip or event from 12pm on to the afternoon. David Corey stated we could explore that option once we have an idea on funding. Tiffini wanted to confirm everything with the Board tonight, and take the formal position before exploring funding options.

Kenneth Cook stated Tiffini Sharp has put him in touch with Jim Alberici for a young adult employment program for ages 18-20 in the Montezuma area. Kenneth would have to keep track of hours and the county would cover the cost of wages, benefits and insurance required. Thomas Fitzsimmons stated we previously worked with this program in the past with success. The board agreed this would be a great idea. Tiffini also stated the Town could advertise this program, if someone was wanting to be hired and have them apply through Jim Alberici.

David Corey confirmed with Patricia Craine which account should be paying for the tree removal throughout the town, who checked with the state to determine which account this should come out of. A budget transfer of \$9184.25 is required to the account DA5140.4 Miscellaneous Brush and Weeds. Thomas Fitzsimmons made the motion to pass the resolution, seconded by Christopher Howard. Motion carried 5/0.

David Corey brought the bills to be approved. Christopher Howard confirmed the port-a-potty rentals are finished for the season. David Corey confirmed that the phone bills have been adjusted properly, Marie Cronin confirmed they have. Christopher Howard asked if the retirement payment is always paid in advance, David Corey confirmed it is. David Corey requested a motion to approve the monthly bills. The motion was made by Christopher Howard, seconded by Thomas Hitchcock Jr. Motion carried 5/0.

David Corey presented the supervisor report. Christopher Howard asked about the General A Parks & Recreations and General A Part D development funds in NYCLASS. David Corey confirmed that it is drawn from when it is needed by Patricia Craine, this money is put into the budget. Cheryl Longyear asked about the Veterans' Services funds, which David Corey stated was for the cost of the veterans' flags. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about the labor for the

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highway fund being drawn from the summer budget instead of winter. Kenneth Cook confirmed he has been in touch with Patricia Craine and it will be corrected. David Corey has also spoken with her. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about the Civil Service paperwork for meter reading, which was not received. David Corey confirmed Patricia Craine came in today to fax the document directly to Cayuga County to ensure it was received. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about the SW1-8340.11 Transmission and Distribution Assistant, asking where the \$732.95 payment was made to. Kenneth Cook confirmed \$650 was removed for David Ware's class and labor costs. He stated Heather Tanner has asked for billing of parts for projects such as water pits, as well as labor and materials used to put them in. Kenneth Cook said the initial cost was \$1,200 for the water pit with a total cost to each homeowner of \$600. However, the cost is approximately \$2,200 with labor being included and disrupts the incoming funds reporting. Thomas Fitzsimmons stated this was done as a demonstration to show what the project costs, rather than implying the homeowner is responsible for this. David Corey confirmed this bill would state "Amount Owed \$0" to prevent homeowners from being concerned they are responsible for the total bill. Kenneth Cook stated the billing will be updated from now on in this format. Thomas Fitzsimmons also questioned the Town Clerk equipment contractual funds changing. Marie Cronin confirmed nothing was purchased with that account. David Corey will follow up with Patricia Craine to ensure that is updated. Thomas Fitzsimmons made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Christopher Howard, motion carried 5/0.

The minutes for the dates of October 10th, 15th, 17th, Nov 7th and Nov 14th were presented for approval. Thomas Fitzsimmons suggested editing the October 15th minutes and having a workshop to discuss the lead testing and water project updates with Bill Kimball from C2AE. Christopher Howard agreed this would be helpful. Thomas Fitzsimmons also mentioned the upcoming home water project. David Corey stated it should be tabled until funding offers are received, as the project cannot move forward until this is determined. Thomas Fitzsimmons stated Laraway Road was removed from the project and it stretches down to Chapman Rd and underneath the thruway, where property will likely never exist. David Corey stated there are multiple other options for routing the project, but we are waiting until funding is offered to determine the scope of the project. Thomas Fitzsimmons stated resolutions should not be requested on documents given the same day. David Corey said he was not made aware of any contractors attending tonight's meeting until yesterday. Christopher Howard mentioned he would like to see more lists of accounts. David Corey confirmed it is provided in the books provided to the Board members for review. He is trying to follow the state's requirements to modify budgets to prevent overdrafts.

Marie Cronin asked if the large pile of minutes would like to be brought to next month's meeting. Kathy Decker requested the monthly Town Board meetings be reviewed first to allow them to be posted to the website. David Corey agreed to start with the October 15th meeting minutes. Thomas Fitzsimmons referenced the hydraulic reports and asked if everyone has received the 55 page longer report requested at the October 15th meeting. It was confirmed everyone has received them. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked about C2AE returning to review these reports with the Board. David Corey said he will reach out to C2AE to request they return for this. Thomas Fitzsimmons asked for clarification on the plans and David Corey stated this would be researched once the funding is received. Christopher Howard stated that once the town is accepted for the project, a list will begin for when the project will begin. Thomas Fitzsimmons expressed frustration with not talking about the project enough yet. David Corey reassured that

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he is happy to request C2AE comes back, but the Town is still awaiting confirmation of funding before pushing the project further. Christopher Howard stated it seems the plan is not what was discussed. David Corey said it is not set in stone and can be adjusted once the project is set to move forward once funds are offered. He will reach out to C2AE to return back for clarification. Thomas Fitzsimmons stated the water is being run through the thruway and questions the chlorination. He says it has not been brought up yet and should. He mentioned W Loop Rd and Dwyer Rd have not had as good of water quality as others since the usage is lower and expressed concern for the pressure.

David Ware mentions that he had 2 trucks hooked to the water line while firefighting and was concerned about the pressure with no flow of water, but he had excellent pressure from the system. He used around 50,500 gallons of water through his firetruck and never lost water once. He does not feel a concern of water pressure is needed in this as there were no low-level alarms in this scenario. He feels the system performed exactly as it should have. He also stated hooking to two hydrants is typically not recommended, but the fire departments were able to do this as it was crucial while fighting the fire on Route 31. He has 25 years of firefighting experience and this is extremely good system operation. Thomas Fitzsimmons mentioned an issue of taking water in another location for another fire and David Ware confirmed that was an issue for the hydrant opening, not water pressure. David Ware stated Stan Longyear has since confirmed the hydrant was operational.

Thomas Hitchcock Jr. asked if a meter was returned. Kenneth Cook confirmed it was. Thomas Hitchcock Jr asked if EZ-passes were ordered for the trucks yet. Kenneth Cook stated he is trying to get municipality ones. David Corey asked if it could be billed to the Town. Kenneth Cook stated there would be a \$70 administrative fine added on for each individual charge.

David Corey asked for a motion to approve to October 15th minutes. Christopher Howard made the motion, seconded by Marvin King as amended. Motion carried 5/0.

Public concerns and questions were requested. David Ware mentioned CPR training is needed and he will reach out to schedule the class. Kenneth Cook mentioned requesting a drop safe for water bills to prevent cash from being left on the water clerk desk. The Board members agreed and voted 5/0 to purchase a safe for water payments.

David Corey made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Thomas Hitchcock Jr, motion carried 5/0.

Minutes submitted by Deputy Town Clerk on 11/27/2024.

Tiffini Sharp