

TOWN OF FRIENDSHIP
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 4, 2026 6PM

Supervisor Blouvet calls meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance: observed by all

Roll call: Supervisor: James Blouvet- present
Councilmember-Linda Mascho-present
Councilmember-Dave Norton-present
Councilmember-Ken Burdick-present

Also present-Patricia Schurr Town Clerk

Assemblage: George Ritter, Pearl Harris, James Monheim, Yvonne Marks, Teresa Cassidy, Tracy Peters, Mary Hendry, Tony France, Rachael Jablonski, Don Weir, Shawn McCarthy, Russ Hall, Dell Baker, Michelle Baker, B.J. Howe, Jim Lewis, Donna Lewis, Emily Zimmer, Linda Cash, Cassidy Jones, Brian Swank, Jane Gilliland, others attended names not gotten.

This Meeting is regarding the BESS or Battery Energy Storage Systems.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to gather information, hear questions and comments from residents, and discuss the potential impacts of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) on our community.

This meeting is intended to help the Town Board better understand the facts, concerns, and opportunities related to BESS so we can determine the Town's position and consider any appropriate actions to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our residents.

We ask that everyone participate respectfully and allow all speakers the opportunity to be heard. Your input is important and will help inform the Town Board's decisions moving forward.

Discussion:

Supervisor Blouvet stated this meeting was regarding a Battery Storage coming into this area and it seems everything has been tight lipped over an information. The Town of Friendship is trying to get ahead of anything coming into the area.

Councilmember, Ken Burdick as the assemblage if anyone was possibly for this and all were against This coming into this area. This battery storage is to go in is where the old I-86 repair was that was thought that a Restaurant/Bar was going in. It's hard to get any information, checked and it is not registered as commercial. Councilmember thinks this Battery Storage Company is just fishing for an area to put it in. It would offer them a good supply line, 275 is a major transmission line. He knows that something is going in on Salt rising Road, and in the Town of Burns. There is funding by the State and there are deadlines for the solar and wind. In the last administration the Inflation reduction Act of 2022 prompted a U.S. federal law focused on clean energy incentives which provides tax credits and grant for solar, wind and nuclear energy.

Any solar, windmill, battery storage local laws has to be approved through the Allegany County Planning Board.

Emily Zimmer who lives on Hess road has been very involved and against any battery Energy storage operation going in. She advised that the IDA would have to obtain a permit from the Town, and the Town should hit them with a large permit, make it very costly for them. Currently there is no proposal, no moratorium, but there is the property on Hess Road Emily stated that Electrical energy is unstable; if on fire you cannot put it out with water; heavy metals pollute the air and seep into ground water.

They are trying to go after small Towns. Safety Codes are coming out as this is happening. The best way is to make a local law very costly for anything to come into the area. The Town needs a Local Law and a moratorium. This puts a pause or time for the Town to do research for a year or whatever timeline the Town decides. The County Planning Board has to approve the Local law/moratorium. A Planning Board was suggested.

Cassidy Jones advised that Towns should obtain a proper Attorney that can put together a solid moratorium, have it filed properly with the correct language. The Towns should come together and decide on a good lawyer, which will probably be expensive but if the Towns come together and split the cost not making it so costly.

Linda Cash advised that if you hire an Environmental Attorney he can require a letter of bond if there is a catastrophic event happens.

Is there is a contingency plan? What happens when it dies or ends. What happens if the company goes bankrupt. Who will clean up in the end? For years contamination goes into the air, soil, water.

Supervisor Blouvet was recently in California at Moss Landing at Vistra Energy Storage Facility, it had a Fire Jan., 16, 2025, burned for 2 days.

Russ Hall advised that ORES in Allegany County is responsible for permitting major renewal energy projects like wind and solar farms. He stated that ORES does not have to do a SEQR or DEC.

BESS does not mean it wont be on Hess Rd, it could be down the road in the Community. It could go up anywhere. The Town of Willing renewed it moratorium after 18 months.

The other Communities are in the process of coming together to reduce the costs:

Town of Alfred

Town of Amity

Town of Belfast

Possibly Town of Granger

*BESS is not a Public Utility, not recognized as a utility.

Supervisor Blouvet stated that there is a monthly meeting and he will bring this subject up to other Supervisors of the Towns to see if the Towns can come together and what their thoughts are.

Supervisor Chamberlain in Belfast is ahead of the Supervisors meeting.

It was suggested that the Towns obtain an Environmental Lawyer. Suggested an Attorney from Buffalo, The Town of Amity knows the name of the Lawyer suggested.

After discussions and concerns the following motion was set forth:

Motion to have an Attorney Amend the current Town's Local Local Law to include BESS and to implement the moratorium, offered by Linda Mascho, seconded by Dave Norton.

Roll call: Linda Mascho-aye, Dave Norton-aye, Ken Norton-aye, James Blouvet-aye.

Supervisor questioned if there were anymore questions or concerns, there being none he advised there were a few pressing issues on other non- related matters that had to be addressed, they could stay or they could leave.

Motion to approve the Highway Dept. to purchase a State Bid 40,000 lb. tag-along trailer with beavertail & ramps in the amount of \$34,902.44, offered by Linda Mascho, seconded by Dave Norton.

Roll call vote: Linda Mascho:aye, Dave Norton:aye, Ken Burdick:aye

James Blouvet:aye

Motion to take bids for the work on the Courthouse(wellman house)for the ramp front and side door funded by a NYS Justice Grant. To place to be placed in the paper for closed bids and, to open them up at 6:50pm on August 19. Bids must be received by 1:00 pm on August 18, 2026, offered by Dave Norton, seconded by Linda Mascho.

Roll call: Linda Mascho:aye

Dave Norton:aye

Ken Burdick:aye

James Blouvet:aye

Motion to adjourn, offered by Ken Burdick, seconded by Linda Mascho.

7:31pm

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Schurr, Town Clerk