

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

Target Date Set for Vitrification Facility Demolition

June 22, 2017

ASHFORD—The Town of Ashford board heard updates on the West Valley Demonstration Project and the Community Shared Solar project at its June 14 meeting.

New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia reported that from the federal budget for 2017, the West Valley Demonstration Project received \$69.6 million in funding, an increase of about \$8 million from 2016. The increase in funding will allow the WVDP to accelerate the start of the demolition of the vitrification facility, with a target start date of Aug. 1. The funding will also allow for some important infrastructure work on the project, including a new electric tie in to the site.

President Donald Trump's 2018 appropriation for the site is \$63 million, Bembia said, a \$6 million decrease from 2017. Congress worked to increase the funds for 2017, and Bembia suggested the board talk with their representatives in Congress to thank them for the initial bump and tell them that funding should hopefully be between \$70 and \$75 million for the continued cleanup.

Bembia also reported NYSERDA's recent work on the town's proposal for the development of a community shared solar project. After evaluating electric bills and other information provided by Supervisor Charles Davis, NY-Sun said they find electric rates are low in the area and are continuing to research other factors that could impact the project in terms of attracting developers to fund and run the project and to provide savings to subscribers. Bembia also reported that NYSERDA has a group of experts researching interconnection costs – the cost of modifications to tie the new solar facility into the electric grid and handle the increased electric workload – and will have more information by the next meeting.

In other board news:

- The board appointed Angela Ghani as the new summer recreation director to replace Lisa Proctor after her resignation.
- Highway Superintendent Tim Engels reported on recent and upcoming road work. There will be work to fix collapsed culvert pipes on Watson, Cole and Folts roads coming up and work on Bond Road is nearing completion. Engels said they hopefully will be working to repave Hillview Drive, School Street and the municipal parking lots soon with their Pave NY funds.
- The board awarded a bid for fencing at the West Valley Fire Department pump station to Active Fence for \$5,200.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be Wednesday, July 12 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.