

Regular Meeting
May 4, 2016

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, in the board room of the Town Hall building was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., Supervisor
Larry R. Jones, Councilman
Michael R. Park, Councilman
Barry E. Warren, Councilman
Kevin M. Williams, Councilman
Patrick M. Snyder, Attorney for the Town
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

John R. Daniels, Code Enforcement Officer
Linda Jones, Cortland County Legislator
Gordon Wheelock, Cortland County Legislator
Bernie Zolla, Audio-Visual Assistant, Homer Central School
Nancy Ruscio, Superintendent, Homer Central School District
Michael Falls, Finance Director, Homer Central School District
William Pedrick, HCS board member
David Quinlan, HCS board member

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

The minutes of the April 6th, 2016, regular meeting were approved as presented, on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. The Town Clerk's report of all receipts and disbursements for April.
2. The Supervisor's report of all receipts and disbursements for March & April.
3. The Deputy Code Enforcement Officer's report of building permits issued in April.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #80 through #102 totaling \$21,776.84 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #63 through #76 totaling \$7,358.94 be approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

Memorial Day Parade – Supervisor Forbes invited all Board members to participate in the parade to be held the morning of Monday, May 30th. Highway Superintendent Phelps will once again be providing the transportation with his horse-drawn wagon.

Worker's Compensation – There was discussion about participation in the County's worker's compensation fund. Councilman Williams is to look into the cost of participation in a plan offered by a private carrier. If the Town decides to leave the County plan it must inform the County by June 1st. The topic will again be discussed at the next meeting of the CCTVCS Committee on Tuesday, May 10th.

CHIPS highway aid – Forbes reported that for 2016 the Town will receive \$150,342.73 in Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) and \$34,317.32 in PAVE-NY aid.

Postage meter refill – On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park, and carried unanimously: **the Town Clerk was authorized to add \$1,000 in postage to the Town postage meter.**

Highway School – On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **it was agreed to pay the \$110 fee for the Highway Superintendent to attend the 2016 Highway School presented by the Association of Towns and the Cornell Local Roads Program in Ithaca from June 5th through June 8th.**

Assessor's Office – The Town Board agreed to purchase movable shelving for the Assessor's Office rather than have shelving built into a closet space.

The Assessor Committee will be discussing a request by the Assessor Clerk for a raise at their meeting scheduled for May 11th. Supervisor Forbes said that he would like to see it be retroactive to January.

Senior Center – Councilman Warren agreed to look into installing an outdoor light at the former Senior Center entrance on Water Street. This was requested by the election inspectors who plan to use the door as an exit during elections to cut down on congestion in the room.

Proposed solar farm – Code Enforcement Officer John Daniels was present to discuss a proposal by the Neuman family on Route 11 to build a 300 module solar farm. Because they intend to sell the energy generated to National Grid for energy credits on their rental properties, the project is considered commercial and the Town's current Zoning Law does not address this issue.

Town Attorney Snyder explained the procedure involved in changing the zoning law which can take several months. On motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Planning Board be asked to propose an amendment to the Town Zoning Law to allow commercial solar energy projects in the Town.**

Village recreation contract - Attorney Snyder noted that the new recreation contract has different wording regarding indemnification and suggested that the Town's insurance company review that wording.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Supervisor Forbes is authorized to sign the contract with the Village for the Town's support of the Village's recreation programs for the year 2016-2017 in the amount of \$32,943.54, subject to approval by the Town's liability insurance carrier.**

Town Hall updates – Councilman Warren reported that Time Warner has installed cable internet service and Plan First Technologies has made sure each area of the building is properly connected. Work still needs to be done to move the fax line in the Town Office. Beard Electric helped with the internet installation and has completed installing smoke detectors that are tied into the Town's alarm system.

Warren also said that he would like to go ahead with the proposed renovation of the Town Clerk's Office. A bid from Heath Construction and Renovation, which renovated the former Village Office, was received and opened as follows:

1. Install shelving and bi-fold doors in closet in Assessor's Office = \$850.00
2. Complete renovation of counter, including relocation and new countertop, in Town Clerk's Office and painting of Town Clerk's Office, hallway, break room and meeting room = \$7,600.00.

The Board agreed that the specifications of the bid may need to be changed and agreed to hold off on the decision until June.

Councilmen Warren and Park reported that they have not been contacted by anyone from the Village regarding the possibility of the Village Offices being moved back to the Town Hall. Supervisor Forbes stated and the board members agreed that it is up to the Village to approach the Town on this matter.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET FOR 2016-2017

Homer Central School District Superintendent Nancy Ruscio and Finance Director Michael Falls explained the proposed budget for the next school year which will be voted on by the public on Tuesday, May 17th. They explained that, while restoring the Gap Elimination Adjustment and increasing State Aid, New York State continues to underfund its school districts. Despite that, there will be no increase in the tax levy for the 2016-17 school budget.

Town Board members thanked them for the informative presentation.

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Pat Snyder reported that he had been contacted by the Sheriff's office and asked whether there is a noise ordinance in effect in the town. There is none in effect now, although there had been some discussions about enacting one. He explained that a noise ordinance in the City of Syracuse that did not require decibel monitoring equipment had been upheld after court challenges. Supervisor Forbes asked if a noise regulation should be addressed at the same time as revising the zoning to allow for solar energy projects. It was decided to put the noise issue off until after the solar energy issue was resolved.

Attorney Snyder agreed to look into how the Town would go about lowering the speed limit on the Town of Homer portion of Cosmos Hill Road from 55 mph to 40 mph, following a complaint received by Councilman Williams from a Cosmos Heights resident.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Gordon Wheelock reported on the activities of the County Legislature over the past month, including safety and energy upgrades at the County Office building and other County-owned buildings.

Supervisor Forbes commented that he was glad that the Legislature had voted to put the proposed County jail/public safety complex on hold. He suggested that there needs to be more cooperation between the County and the City of Cortland, and questioned the proposed location of the building and the need for public safety complex rather than just a jail.

Wheelock also said that the County had purchased defibrillators for each Senior Center and asked Councilman Warren to look into the proper location for the defibrillator.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk