

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, June 8, 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
Kevin M. Williams, Councilman
Patrick M. Snyder, Attorney for the Town
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

ABSENT

Barry E. Warren, Councilman
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT

Martin Sweeney, Town Historian
Linda Jones, Cortland County legislator
Gordon Wheelock, Cortland County legislator

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

The minutes of the May 4th, 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 May.
2. The Supervisor's report of all receipts and disbursements for May.
3. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for the months of April & May.
4. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued in May.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #103 through #140 totaling \$39,546.19 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: the Highway vouchers #77 through #97 totaling \$93,351.15 be approved for payment.**

TOWN HISTORIAN

Town Historian Martin Sweeney informed the Board about the 3rd annual Homer History Celebration scheduled for June 17th and 18th. He invited Town officials to attend the unveiling of the newly acquired portrait by Francis B. Carpenter of his fiancée Augusta Prentice which has been restored and re-framed. The unveiling will take place at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, June 17th, at the Center for the Arts.

Sweeney also presented a video developed by the Town Historic Advisory Committee to promote placing statuary at the Homer Town Hall honoring three famous Homer residents, Francis B. Carpenter,

William O. Stoddard, and Eli DeVoe, who each played an important role during Abraham Lincoln's presidency. The Board expressed their appreciation for all his efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

Wall Street Bridge – Supervisor Forbes suggested that a meeting be scheduled to discuss the repair or replacement of the Wall Street Bridge with Superintendent Phelps, Councilmen Park and Williams, Town Historian Sweeney, and Mary Alice Bellardini, along with representatives of the Village Board.

Village Street Department - Forbes suggested that, at the request of the Village board, Councilmen Park and Warren meet with Village representatives to discuss options for further cooperation between the Village and Town Highway Departments following the resignation of the Village's Street Superintendent.

Assessor's Office – Supervisor Forbes reported that the current Assessor, Randy Deal, will be retiring as of October 1st. The opening is being advertised. He said that Deal is willing to work part-time until December if necessary. The Board members agreed to add former Assessor Clerk, and former Town Board member, Frances Armstrong to the combined Homer-Virgil-City of Cortland committee to review prospective applicants, at Forbes suggestion.

Workers' Compensation – There was much discussion regarding workers' compensation. The County is revamping the Cortland County Self-Insurance Fund to cover large deficits in some comp claims by a few municipalities. Supervisor Forbes said that although the Towns, Villages, and the City had been meeting regularly with the County to discuss this issue, they were not informed that the County had signed a 5-year contract with McNeill & Company in February for administration of the plan until a May meeting, and were upset that costs previously carried by the County were going to be charged back to the individual Towns and Villages.

Because of anticipated increases in the cost of the program through the County, Councilman Williams is in process of getting quotes from private carriers. He suggested that a special meeting be held when he gets the quotes because a decision must be made by the end of the month.

State Equalization rate – Supervisor Forbes read a letter from the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services stating that the equalization rate for 2016 is 100%.

Health insurance - Forbes reported that Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Central New York has requested a rate increase of 15.1% for 2017.

Farmland Protection – On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town of Homer supports the application proposal of owner Douglas Riehlman of the 38.40 acre farm located on Maxson Road in the Town of Homer to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets for its Farmland Protection grant program.**

COUNTY LEGISLATORS

County Legislators Wheelock and Jones reported on a County-wide free event scheduled for July 15th to July 24th at the Homer Intermediate/Junior High School in which medical, dental, optometry, and veterinary services will be offered. The free clinic is offered through a grant to the County and the services are provided by medical personnel in the U.S. military. The legislators also discussed various options for a new County jail.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Attorney Snyder outlined the procedure involved in lowering the speed limit on a Town road. Complaints have been received about the speed limit on Cosmos Hill Road which is used by many for jogging and walking dogs, and is currently 40 mph in the Cortlandville section of the road.

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that in response to concerns expressed by area residents, and with the agreement of John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent of the Town of Homer, the Town Board hereby requests authorization to lower the speed limit on Cosmos Hill Road, a Town highway, from State Route 90 to the Town of Cortlandville town line from 55 mph to 40 mph.**

Supervisor Forbes reported on the receipt of a complaint about speeding on East River Road. Since it is maintained by the County Highway Department, he will be contacting them as well as the Sheriff's Department to see if something can be done to alleviate the problem.

Attorney Snyder discussed the matter of worker's compensation coverage for the Dog Control Officer. Since she works for other Towns as well as Homer, he said that State law allows municipalities to share costs such as worker's compensation through an inter-municipal agreement. Forbes said that he would look further into the matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously, it was resolved to enter into an executive session at 8:10 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person.

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously, the executive session was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

On motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the hourly wages of Assessor Clerk Colleen Brown be increased by \$2.30/hour to \$17.30/ hour and that the increase be made retroactive to April 1st, 2016; and that for legal holidays she be paid for 4 hours, or ½ day.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk