

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, September 7, 2016, in the board room of the Town Hall building was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., at 6:50 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

Kevin Walsh, resident, Cosmos Hill Road
Linda Jones, Cortland County Legislator
Gordon Wheelock, Cortland County Legislator
Donald Ferris, reporter, The Homer News
Gary Lawrence, resident, Mountainview Drive, arriving at 7:15 p.m.
Don Fisher, member of Preble Town Board & Little York Lake Road resident, arriving at 7:15 p.m.
Patrick Clune, Village of Homer Trustee, arriving at 7:45 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

The minutes of the August 3rd board meeting were approved as presented, on motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. The Supervisor's report of all receipts & disbursements for July.
2. The Town Clerk's report of all receipts & disbursements for August.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued for August.
4. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for the month of August.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #190 through #220 totaling \$54,616.17 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #131 through #153 totaling \$45,645.56 be approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

Court audit – Supervisor Forbes reminded board members Williams and Jones that the annual audit of the Justice Court financial records will need to be scheduled for this fall.

Community Development Grant – On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board authorizes the payment of \$1000 plus reimbursables to Thoma Development Consultants for their application on behalf of the Town for a**

2016 Community Development Block Grant for housing rehabilitation through the New York State Office of Community Renewal.

Planning Board alternate – There was discussion about appointing an alternate to the Planning Board in the event that a member is absent or has a conflict of interest. On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously, **the Town Board agreed to ask the Planning Board to recommend an alternate member for their Board.**

Bank reconciliation review – Councilman Williams agreed to check with the NYS Comptroller's Office for a worksheet that the Town Board could use to provide monthly oversight of the Town's bank statements and reconciliation process.

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

Annual Tioughnioga River clean-up – Supervisor Forbes reported that the annual fall clean-up of the river is scheduled for Saturday, September 24th from 10 a.m. to noon and that the Soil & Water Conservation District is again asking for volunteers.

OLD BUSINESS

Wall Street Bridge update – Forbes stated that prior to any work being done, the ground will need to be tested so that engineers will know how to design any new bridge headers. Although a bid had been received for conducting the ground borings, no action was taken. Forbes said that the Bridge Committee is waiting for a representative from the State to examine the aging historic bridges. So far the Committee has agreed that of the three nineteenth century lenticular-truss bridges, the Wall Street Bridge allows for a better traffic flow than the Pine Street Bridge. The Water Street Bridge has been a walking bridge since the 1990's. Councilman Park said they have discussed widening the bridge to 14 feet and a two-foot wide walkway. He said that in view of the recent fires on Main Street and on Wall Street, a wider bridge is a major consideration since the aging bridge cannot handle the weight of a fire truck.

Cosmos Hill Road speed limit – Supervisor Forbes reported that the Town has now received the official permission to lower the speed limit on Cosmos Hill Road from 55 mph to 40 mph. The Highway Superintendent has purchased the necessary signage and will be posting it as soon as possible.

Assessor update – Supervisor Forbes reported that the Assessor Committee has been meeting frequently to narrow down the field of candidates to replace Randy Deal who is retiring as Assessor for the Towns of Homer and Virgil, and the City of Cortland, as of October 3rd. They hope to have someone in place by early December.

Internet access – Forbes reported the completion of the improvements for internet access and separate networks in the Town Hall building. The situation is much improved over a year ago.

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Snyder reported that the Planning Board has been working on changes to the Town's zoning law based on a model developed by the CNY Regional Planning & Development Board. He also said that Lindsay Andersen, Dog Control Officer, has scheduled two trials for dog-related violations in the Town Justice Court for October 19th.

COUNTY LEGISLATORS

County Legislator Gordon Wheelock gave a brief summary of activities at the county level over the past month including working on issues related to the construction of a new county jail.

LITTLE YORK LAKE MILFOIL

Gary Lawrence, a resident and property owner on Little York Lake, and Don Fisher, also a resident and property owner on Little York Lake and a member of the Preble Town Board, were present to explain the persistent weed control problem on the Lake, a problem that has increased dramatically within the last four years. They are forming an advisory committee to look into the best way to deal with the issue and would like a member of the Homer Town Board to be on that committee. Cortland County Soil & Water has been working with them to put together a management plan for the Lake.

Supervisor Forbes, Councilman Williams, and Attorney Snyder had visited the Lake earlier in August to view the problem first hand. Gary Lawrence had shown them how the milfoil breaks off and floats on the top of the water and how he had loaded up 7 truckloads of the milfoil just near his own property. He said that if the issue persists, it will bring down the value of the lakefront properties.

Fisher said that zebra mussels had invaded the lake a few years ago, making the water much clearer, and what with a lowered water level, created the perfect environment for the milfoil, also an invasive species, to thrive. He said that finding a solution will be complicated and, most likely, expensive, especially if dredging the lake is the answer. He is in hope that the Committee can come up with a management plan over the next four to six months.

Supervisor Forbes thanked Lawrence and Fisher for their presentation. Councilman Mike Park volunteered to be on the Little York Lake Advisory Committee.

VILLAGE STREET DEPARTMENT

There was discussion about having been approached by Village Trustee Ed Finkbeiner to consider combining the Town Highway Department with the Village Street Department. Supervisor Forbes said that he applauds him for considering new ways to save the Village taxpayers money. Councilman Warren said that he does not see ways to save money as both buildings and all employees would be necessary to do the work. Councilman Park suggested that a massive reorganization would be needed and that cost savings may be found after combining the departments. Councilman Williams said that the Town should simply agree to discuss the matter with the Village. Warren said he would get back to Finkbeiner on the issue.

Village Trustee Patrick Clune reported that the Village committee assigned with looking for more office space had met that night and that they are currently deciding how much and what types of space they actually need.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk