

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, February 6, 2019, in the Town Hall Senior Center was called to order by Deputy Supervisor Michael R. Park at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Michael R. Park, Deputy Supervisor  
Larry R. Jones, Councilman  
Barry E. Warren, Councilman  
Kevin M. Williams, Councilman  
Patrick M. Snyder, Attorney for the Town  
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent  
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

ABSENT

Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., Supervisor

OTHERS PRESENT

Linda Jones, Cortland County Legislator  
Shenandoah Briere, reporter, Cortland Standard  
Don Ferris, reporter, The Homer News

MINUTES

**The minutes of the January 8<sup>th</sup> annual organizational meeting and the January 10<sup>th</sup> special meeting were approved as presented,** on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. The Town Clerk's monthly report of all receipts & disbursements for January.
2. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of building permits issued in January.
3. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for the month of January.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General Fund vouchers #10 through #37 totaling \$22,621.76 are approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway Fund vouchers #5 through #32 totaling \$44,235.16 are approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

Tax collection extension – On motion by Deputy Supervisor Park, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that an extension of time for the Tax Collector to collect the 2019 Town and County taxes until May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, is approved.**

Justice Court audit – Deputy Supervisor Park asked Councilmen Jones and Williams to conduct an audit of the 2018 Town Justice Court accounting records at their earliest convenience, in response to a letter from the NYS Office of Court Administration requesting the same.

Budget modifications – Board members reviewed an outline of the end of the year budget modifications that had been approved by Supervisor Forbes. On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the proposed modifications of the 2018 Town budget as of the end of the fiscal year were approved as presented (attached).**

Thank-you notes – Board members read two thank-you notes received. One was from the family of Paul Burhans who had served as the Town’s Dog Control Officer for decades and who had passed away in January. A donation to the animal shelter in his memory was made by the Town Board members.

The other note was from James & Sally Gray whose home on Water Street was part of the Town’s Community Development Block Grant for housing rehabilitation. The Gray’s thanked the Board for allowing them and others the opportunity to improve their homes.

Change orders – On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the general contractor, W L Kline, construct a new Formica countertop to replace the current one located in the future Village Office at a cost not to exceed \$900, but only if they are unable obtain the identical Formica for an extension of the counter.**

On motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that change order #2 for the general contractor, W L Kline, to insulate the sub-attic at a cost of \$2,600, and change order #3, to frame, insulate, sheetrock and finish the north and south walls of the cross-hall at a cost of \$5,500, are approved.**

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that a change order for the electrical contractor, Beard Electric, LLC, for the installation of internet and phone connections for the new Town and Village offices is approved for up to \$11,305.**

Request for Highway Work Permits – Deputy Supervisor Park explained that a company working on behalf of Verizon has requested Highway Work Permits in order to install buried conduit along the roadway on Hatfield Road, Houghton Hill Road, and Searles Road. They have also requested a permit for Shippey Road, but as that is maintained by the County Highway Department, Park suggested that it be sent to the County for their approval instead. Highway Superintendent Phelps agreed to contact the County Highway Department regarding the Shippey Road request.

Attorney Snyder explained that due to a change in New York State regulations (part 617), the installation of telecommunication lines is classified as a “Type II” action under SEQR and an environmental assessment form is no longer required.

On motion by Deputy Supervisor Park, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board authorizes the issuance of Highway Work Permits for Verizon New York Inc. to install buried conduit along Hatfield Road, Houghton Hill Road and Searles Road.**

## OLD BUSINESS

Pine Street Bridge –Deputy Supervisor Park reported that he had just received the engineering plans for the repair of the Pine Street Bridge from engineers Barton & Loguidice. He asked the Board members to review the plans which he would be emailing to them. He suggested that the Board have a special meeting to authorize Barton & Loguidice to proceed with the bid process in order that the work could be completed as soon as possible this year.

Park explained that by repairing the Pine Street Bridge it would be upgraded from a 3-ton weight limit to a 5-ton weight limit. Currently the Bridge is closed, even for pedestrian traffic, due to having been red-flagged by the State DOT. Park suggested that since the replacement of the Wall Street Bridge, which is proposed to have a 20-ton weight limit, could take at least two years, it was important to have at least one of the bridges able to be used for normal traffic and pedestrians.

Attorney Snyder pointed out that the documentation contained a short environmental assessment form, but it also contained statements that the project is “Type II” under SEQ. He stated that the project appears to be Type II to him because it is the replacement in kind of an existing structure. If that is the case no further environmental review is required.

#### HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps reported that he and Deputy Highway Superintendent Dale Everts will be attending a workshop offered by Cortland County Soil & Water on “Erosion and Sediment Control” at a cost of \$75 per person, and that he, Everts, and three other employees would also be attending the “New York State Dig Safely Certified Excavator Program” at a cost of \$25 per person. Both workshops will be held on Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, at the New York State Grange.

Phelps reported that he is replenishing his sand and salt supplies due to heavy use so far this winter. As soon as he has the opportunity he will be sweeping the roadsides which will enable him to replace and re-use the sand.

Advocacy Day in Albany will be held on March 6<sup>th</sup>. He is planning to attend along with many other area Highway Superintendents to advocate for increased funding for the CHIPS program, and for other related issues.

#### ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Snyder said that after reviewing the materials provided by resident Victor Siegle at a recent Town Board meeting, he has been researching the issue of tax assessment for commercial solar energy projects. Although he doesn’t agree with all of the arguments that were made, Snyder does have concerns about participating in the County’s PILOT program for such projects. He has been discussing the issue with the Assessor’s Office and they have been providing very useful information. The Town Board asked Attorney Snyder to make recommendations regarding commercial solar energy projects and PILOT agreements at the March meeting.

#### CORTLAND COUNTY LEGISLATOR

Legislator Linda Jones gave a report on the activities of the Cortland County Legislature over the past month, from votes on extending the term length of Legislators from 2 to 4 years, to the repair of a leaking roof at the County Public Safety Building. She reported that the Highway Department is taking preventative action by having ash trees cut down at Dwyer Park before they can fall victim to the Emerald ash borer.

Board members thanked her for all her help in securing funding for the replacement of the Town Hall Senior Center carpeting which will now be installed at no cost to the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett  
Town Clerk