

Regular Meeting
August 6, 2008

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held in the board room of the Town Hall Building on Wednesday, August 6, 2008, was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes at 7:35 p.m.

PRESENT

Frederick J. Forbes, Supervisor
Barry E. Warren, Councilman
Dan A. Weddle, Councilman
Kevin M. Williams, Councilman
Brian D. Young, Councilman
Patrick M. Snyder, Attorney for the Town
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Brian Bosch, reporter, Cortland Standard

Supervisor Forbes led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

MINUTES

The minutes of the July 2nd regular meeting and public hearing, and the July 15th and July 22nd special meetings were approved, on motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. Town Clerk's monthly report of all receipts and disbursements for July.
2. Dog Control Officer's monthly report of all activities for July.
3. Report of all building permits issued for July.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #222 through #254 totaling \$52,888.24 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #121 through #136 totaling \$16,435.35 be approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Forbes reported on a meeting he attended with Town Assessor Nedra Griswold and County Real Property Tax Services Director William Cinquanti. Assessor Griswold said that she could not complete a reval until the year 2010 for the 2011 tax year, in spite of the fact that the equalization rate is now at 88%, because she needs to get the Town's assessment files up to date.

Councilman Warren asked if the Town would need to do a reval if the equalization rate returns closer to 100%. Forbes said that the State requires that a reval be done every six years, and the last reval was done in 2005.

Forbes read a letter from Village of Homer Mayor Michael McDermott asking that the Town conduct a reval as soon as possible.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board hereby authorizes the Cortland County Office of Real Property Services to conduct a reval of the Town of Homer in 2010; and that if the equalization rate does self adjust, that the reval be postponed for another year.**

Supervisor Forbes explained that he thought it would make good sense to adopt the same level of tax exemption that the County adopts for both veteran's and aged exemptions.

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town of Homer hereby adopts the same level of exemption for all exemptions, veteran's and aged, as does the County of Cortland.**

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS

Supervisor Forbes said that he has received a bid for removal of the chimney on the back part of the Town Hall that had been used to exhaust the former boiler in the old Justice Court area of the building. The new boiler does not require a chimney.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that JM General Contracting hereby be authorized to remove the brick chimney from the rear of the Town Hall Building which is no longer needed, and to patch and shingle over the opening at a cost of \$850.**

Forbes said that he was also checking into replacing the windows on the Town Hall and had gotten two quotes from the GlassSmith, one for interior storm windows and the other for replacement windows for the entire building. After some discussion, it was decided to obtain more quotes before making a decision.

Supervisor Forbes also said that at budget time he may ask for bids for cleaning the Town Hall offices.

Crawford & Stearns, architects for the Town Hall Additions & Alterations Project, had asked the Town Board to consider sending threatening letters to all the various contractors for the project as they were slow to complete the project. Jon Carnes of Crawford & Stearns had tried to get all the loose ends tied up by this meeting but had not been successful. Forbes suggested that Diamond & Thiel not be included in any letters to be sent because he felt that they have been most cooperative. Scott Crysler of Diamond & Thiel had said that the linoleum in the Senior Center would be done on Friday as would the change of the lock on the front door. The elevator still needs to be inspected before it is operational. The Board discussed other items that need to be addressed prior to closing out the project.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Crawford & Stearns be authorized to inform the plumbing, HVAC, and electrical contractors that the Town will be following the guidelines set forth by the Architect and will be willing to access penalties if the work is not completed by a certain date.**

PLANNING BOARD RESIGNATION

Supervisor Forbes informed the Board that he has received a letter of resignation from Donald Richards from the Town Planning Board as he is now residing in the Town of Scott. Board members were asked to come up with names for a replacement of Richards on that Board. The Town Board agreed that Richards has been a valuable addition to the Planning Board and that he will be missed.

COURT AUDIT

Councilmen Williams and Young said that they are planning to audit the Justice Court records on Thursday, August 14th, in order to bring the Town into compliance with the Office of Court Administration.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps said that the Town Highway Department has spent time over the last few weeks preparing the site of the former Thomas house on the north side of the Town Hall Building for the placement of a parking lot and driveway. The Town Board expressed their appreciation for the excellent job that has been done to date. Phelps said that he would like to thank the Village of Homer, and Buzz Barber and Mike Galeotti in particular, for all their help so far. Phelps said that he also wanted to thank the Town of Cortlandville from whom he has borrowed a bulldozer.

Phelps told the Board of discovering an old cistern or septic tank and a well from an old hotel which was on the site of the Town Hall until it burned down around 1904.

There was much discussion about the parking lot and the site preparation for it.

Superintendent Phelps also spoke of the need to update the Town's highway specifications. He was asked to obtain a copy of the specs used by the Town of Cortlandville for the next Board meeting.

There was also more discussion of the abandonment of Cummings Hill Road.

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Patrick Snyder reported that the County Planning Board has now approved the new zoning law that the Town has been working on over the last four years. He said that they had made no substantive changes to the law.

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Homer has conducted a lengthy study of the proposed new zoning law, and WHEREAS, a designated zoning committee has studied the issues for approximately 4 years and given its recommendations, and WHEREAS, public hearings on the new zoning law have been held and all public comments have been considered, and WHEREAS, the new zoning law is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and WHEREAS, the Cortland County Planning Board has reviewed the proposed zoning law in accordance with General Municipal Law and recommended approval, and WHEREAS, the adoption of a new zoning law is a Type I action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act and a full environmental assessment form has been completed and duly considered, and WHEREAS, the adoption of the new zoning law will not have any adverse environmental impacts but will provide significant environmental benefits,**

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the current zoning is repealed, and the new zoning law and zoning map, dated July 2, 2008, are hereby adopted, to become effective upon filing with the New York Secretary of State.

The Town Board acknowledged the tremendous commitment of time and effort put into creating the new law by the Planning Review Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk