

Regular Meeting  
October 8, 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, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008, was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes at 7:30 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

Paul Burhans, Dog Control Officer  
John Daniels, Code Enforcement Officer  
Bonnie Johnson, budget assistant  
Holden Slattery, reporter, Cortland Standard

Supervisor Forbes led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

MINUTES

**The minutes of the September 3<sup>rd</sup> regular meeting were approved as presented,** on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. Town Clerk's report of all receipts and disbursements for September.
2. Dog Control Officer's monthly report of all activities for September.
3. Code Enforcement Officer's year-to-date report of all building permits issued.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #282 through #322 totaling \$81,635.06 be approved for payment.** Councilman Warren noted that the retainage on the Town Hall Addition & Alterations Project was included in that total.

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #154 through #176 totaling \$109,277.50 be approved for payment.** Councilman Young noted that of that amount around \$89,900 is for SuitKote Corp. for highway repairs.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

John Daniels, Code Enforcement Officer, was present to explain the new format for the report of building permits issued. He has had a computer program by BAS installed that keeps track of all building permits. Daniels said that it cuts down on the amount of work for the Town Clerk who will now keep track of only the fees paid for the permits. It will also alert him if a year has gone by and a permit is not closed out, and when inspections are needed, enabling him to keep a better handle on the building

projects. Councilman Warren reminded the Board that in May they had adopted a new fee schedule based on the square footage of a building project which he feels is fairer for everyone involved.

## NEW BUSINESS

Tax exemptions - Supervisor Forbes explained that in August he had asked the Town Board to adopt the same tax exemptions as the County in order to simplify things for the Real Property Tax Services. Since then he has found out that the Town's veteran's exemption is already higher than the County's, and that the wording for revising the aged exemption must be much more detailed and that a public hearing needs to be held first. Board members agreed to leave the veteran's exemption at the current level.

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board hereby schedule a public hearing to be held at the next regular meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup> in order to increase the income limitation for the Senior Citizens Tax Exemption from \$18,200 to \$22,200.**

New elevator – There was discussion about a maintenance proposal from Victory Lifts for two inspection visits per year at \$275 each visit. Supervisor Forbes is to check with them to see if one visit per year would suffice.

Local Government Shared Services - Supervisor Forbes, Councilmen Williams and Young, and Attorney Snyder all expressed interest in attending a workshop on the Local Government Efficiency Grant Program scheduled for Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Oncenter Complex in Syracuse from 9 am to 4 pm. *(Due to overbooking at Syracuse event, now plan to attend workshop in Binghamton on Wednesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>.)*

Secure document destruction - On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board hereby agrees to use PROSHRED for secure document destruction at a cost of \$45 for a 95 gallon security cart.**

Town Clerk Jebbett said that they should only need to shred documents once or twice a year. Now that the Town has the use of an elevator, they can utilize this service by which a large cart is filled and dumped into a truck in which they are shredded. All the materials are then recycled.

Appointment of a Deputy Town Clerk -On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Michele Bailey hereby be appointed to serve as a Deputy Town Clerk for the Town of Homer.**

Codification of new zoning law - Town Clerk Jebbett presented an estimate by General Code Publishers for incorporating the new Town zoning law into the Town Code Book. The cost to do so is estimated at between \$4,465 and \$5,250 plus shipping and handling, and an additional \$346 for 30 zoning pamphlets.

Board members were concerned about the cost and tabled any action until it is clearer how much money will be available in the Zoning account.

Appointment of Planning Board member -On motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Supervisor Forbes and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Mary Elizabeth "Betsy" Gray of 939 Limerick Lane hereby be appointed to the Town of Homer Planning Board to serve out the remainder of the term of office of Donald Richards, ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.**

## PRELIMINARY TOWN BUDGET – 2009

Supervisor Frederick Forbes presented the preliminary budget for 2009. There was much discussion. Forbes said that the Town Hall Addition & Alterations project had cost \$708,000, which came out to only 4.6% over the original bid amount. They

discussed needing to replace the windows in the Town Hall with more energy-efficient windows. Forbes said that a grant from the State of New York for \$100,000 and the \$70,000 that had been budgeted for the Pine Street bridge repair would help to pay the cost of the windows. He said that he put the sales tax revenue back in the Highway Fund including the \$100,000 previously left with the County. He said that he had lowered the Phillips Library request to a 3% increase. The fire tax rate will remain at \$.51. The result of the budget figures is a \$.06 increase in the Town tax rate – from \$1.52 in 2008 to \$1.58 for 2009.

The Town Board members agreed to discuss the budget further at a budget workshop to be held on Wednesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 9 a.m. (*Now moved to Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>.*)

On motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the preliminary budget as presented by Supervisor Forbes hereby be adopted as the tentative budget for 2009 with the proposed tax rate to be \$1.58 for the Village and \$2.09 (\$1.58 plus .51) for the Town.**

#### TOWN HALL RENOVATION

There was much discussion about the quote submitted by Lewis Heath for lighting the new parking lot. Councilman Warren is to check into what type of timer is on the lights. On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board hereby accepts the quote of Lewis Heath for the installation of lighting for the new parking lot for the amount \$1,839.71.**

The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York is requesting a conference call in regards to the \$100,000 grant that was awarded the Town for renovation of the Town Hall Building. Supervisor Forbes, Attorney Snyder and Councilman Williams agreed to participate in the conference call on Tuesday, October 14, 2008, from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Supervisor Forbes said that the Court Clerk had reported that a man had fallen on the Court Room steps. There was discussion about the need to renovate the entrance to the Court Room and the Senior Center in the near future.

Forbes said that Mary Alice Bellardini of the Landmark Society has offered to have the Landmark Society pay Crawford & Stearns, Architects, for preparing the specs for replacing the Town Hall windows. There was discussion about the work involved in replacing the windows and the type of windows to be purchased. It was noted that concrete work around the windows was also needed. Board members agreed to accept the offer.

#### HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent John Phelps said that much of his time had been spent over the last month working on the new parking lot of the north side of the Town Hall Building. He said that the binder is now down and that the final topcoat will wait until spring in case of any settling. Phelps also remarked about the tremendous help that has been provided by the Village of Homer crews and in particular by Buzz Barber and Mike Galeotti. The Town Board said how much they appreciated all of Phelps's hard work and that they were pleased with the results. Board members signed thank-you notes for the Village Water Department and Street Department for all their hard work on the parking lot. They also thanked Councilman Warren for his effort in designing the parking lot.

Superintendent Phelps also told the Board that they were ahead of schedule in preparing the snow plows for the winter season and that he planned to mix salt with the sand next week. He said that he had purchased a by-product from the County Landfill project to use on the roads next spring. Phelps also said that he had made a turn-around on Carroway Hill Road for snow plowing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk