

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held in the board room of the Town Hall Building on Wednesday, December 8th, 2010, 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

Newell Willcox, Cortland County Legislator
William Chamberlain, Finger Lakes Group
Ray Oliver
Ron Fuller

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 3rd regular meeting and the November 10th special 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. The Town Clerk's monthly report of all receipts and disbursements for the month of November.
2. The Dog Control Officer's monthly report of all activities for November.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's monthly report of all building permits issued in November.
4. The Supervisor's monthly reports of cash receipts and disbursements for the months of October and November.

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 #286 through #322 totaling \$85,741.43 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Young seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #210 through #232 totaling \$49,793.63 be approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

Health Insurance – William Chamberlain from the Finger Lakes Group was present to report to the Town Board as to their options for health insurance coverage. Supervisor Forbes had asked him to look into other health insurance plans. Although Chamberlain explained other options, he said that the plan the Town currently has- a high deductible Excellus plan with a health savings account to make up the deductible- is the best choice for good coverage. He explained the difference between a health savings account and a health reimbursement account. With the health savings account any unspent funds stay in the employee's account and can remain until the employee retires.

Chamberlain said that the Town could move their health savings account to a local bank, but the HSA Bank in Wisconsin offers investment options that are not available through any local banks.

The Town Board thanked him for attending the meeting and explaining the various options.

County landfill – Legislator Newell Willcox was present to explain the County's attempt to make changes in how the landfill operates in order to cut costs. An engineering study was done that looks at various options the County could choose to better utilize the landfill. He explained how an informational meeting at the County had gotten out of hand when those attending protested the County's option to sell or lease the landfill. Willcox said that he hoped the County Legislature would make a decision on the landfill within the next six months to a year. Willcox also explained to the Board why he voted against the proposed County budget for 2011.

Also present to discuss the landfill were Ray Oliver and Ron Fuller who were against the sale or lease of the landfill. They explained that the County meeting had gotten out of hand because it had originally been scheduled as a public hearing and was later changed to an informational meeting. Their concerns included the extra traffic that would be generated and the possible effects on the water quality. They explained how they had a petition against the sale or lease which they will present to the County Legislature.

Cortland County Chamber of Commerce – Supervisor Forbes read a note from Bob Haight, Executive Director of the Chamber, thanking the Town Board for listening to the voters and keeping the tax rate flat for 2011.

Homer Village Recreation Programs – Supervisor Forbes read a note from Recreation Director Jeff Lewis stating that because the Town did not budget an increase for the Village Recreation programs per their request, each Town of Homer participant would have to pay a \$10 surcharge. The Town budgeted \$26,900, the same amount as in the 2010 budget, instead of the \$31,600 they had requested. Board members said that next year they would need to discuss the budget item more thoroughly.

Parking Lot Lighting – There was discussion about whether to repair the old light fixture which is supposed to light up the back parking lot or to have a new light fixture installed. Highway Superintendent Phelps said that he thought the old fixture was part of an old street light. On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board accepts the quote of Lewis Heath for \$363.00 to install a new, energy-efficient light fixture on the back of the Town Hall to illuminate the parking lot.**

TCI Renewables – Supervisor Forbes, Attorney Snyder, and Councilman Williams reported on attending a meeting at the County with TCI Renewables representative Gareth McDonald and representatives from the Towns of Solon, Truxton and Cortlandville regarding TCI's proposed Crown City Wind Farm. They each noted disappointment with some apparent opposition to the wind power project, particularly from the Town of Truxton representatives. Supervisor Forbes noted how such a project could bring jobs to our area, income for some property owners, and payments to the various municipalities, besides helping in efforts to depend less on foreign oil. Board members agreed that the project may take several years, if at all, to be realized.

Village complaint regarding Town Hall air quality – Supervisor Forbes said that the Village Mayor has requested a meeting with Town. Councilman Williams agreed to join Supervisor Forbes for a meeting at the Town Hall at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 14th, to discuss their concerns.

New copiers – Clerk Jebbett said that she was hoping soon to have three quotes on two new copiers, one for the Town Clerk's Office and one for the Justice Court. It was unclear if the Village would be sharing the cost of the copier as they have in the past.

Councilman Warren said that he thinks it would be less expensive to purchase a copier than to lease it. Jebbett expects to have the three quotes by the year-end meeting which will be held on Wednesday, December 29th, at noon.

Credit card tax payments – The Board discussed the possibility of installing a terminal by which the Town could accept credit card payments for the Town and County taxes. Clerk Jebbett explained the costs involved for the terminal and the monthly fee. A charge of 2.5% to 3.0 % would be added to the credit card of the individual charging their tax bill. She said that she prefers a plan being considered by the County which would allow the Town to collect partial payments for taxes in 2012.

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Snyder discussed the most recent developments in the grievance lawsuit by Henkel Corp regarding the former R. H. Miller buildings on James Street. Henkel has been trying to sell their buildings unsuccessfully and feel that they are over-assessed. The Town Board asked Attorney Snyder to compose a letter to the Homer School District and the Village of Homer to explain the potential repercussions of the lawsuit.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps said that he was pleased so far with how his highway crew was adjusting following the retirement of two employees. Attorney Snyder said that if he does want to hire additional help for plowing snow, they would have to be hired as seasonal, part-time employees of the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk