

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, November 6, 2013, in the board room of the Town Hall building 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
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Martin Sweeney, Town Historian
Tyrone Heppard, reporter, Cortland Standard

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Supervisor Forbes congratulated Board members Warren and Williams who were re-elected as Board members, and John Phelps who was re-elected as Highway Superintendent.

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 2nd public hearing and regular meeting and the minutes of the October 23rd budget workshop were approved as presented, on motion by Councilman Weddle, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board:

1. The Supervisor's report of all cash receipts & disbursements for September and October.
2. The Town Clerk's report of all receipts & disbursements for October.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all permits issued for October.
4. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for September and October.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board:

1. The Town Historian's report of all activities from November 1, 2012, to November 1, 2013.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Weddle, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #226 through #256 totaling \$23,827.82 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #161 through #185 totaling \$121,375.68 be approved for payment.**

2014 TOWN BUDGET

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the preliminary Town budget, as amended at the budget workshop, is hereby adopted as the Town of Homer final budget for 2014, with the tax rate to be \$1.29 per thousand for Village residents and \$1.71 per thousand for Town residents.**

OLD BUSINESS

Town Hall parking lot – The Town Board thanked Highway Superintendent Phelps for the excellent paving job on the Town parking lot. Phelps said that he intends to have it lined in the spring.

Wind farm local law – Supervisor Forbes stated that the committee appointed to advise the Town on a proposed zoning law addressing commercial wind farms was at an impasse over setback distances. Forbes said it will be up to the Town Board to make a final decision and he is hopeful that it can be made prior to Christmas.

Councilman Weddle, a member of the Wind Power Committee, said that they are basically adapting the Town of Cortlandville's local law to meet Homer's needs and have only a little more to do besides establishing the setbacks.

Supervisor Forbes warned that a 3280-foot setback, the setback in the Town of Cortlandville law and more than twice the average setback of other wind farms in New York State, could trigger an Article 10 action whereby the State and not the Town would then have the authority to establish the setbacks.

NEW BUSINESS

Board of Assessment Review – On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Young and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Hugh Riehlman be appointed as a temporary member of the Town's Board of Assessment Review for a term of one year through September 30th, 2014.**

Budget Assistant - Supervisor Forbes recommended that Budget Assistant Bonnie Johnson be paid \$350 for her help in preparing the 2014 Town budget. He also recommended that she prepare the NYS tax cap annual filing for both the Town and the Homer Fire District, and be paid \$75 for each filing.

2014 Health insurance – Supervisor Forbes said that the Town's health insurance policy is being discontinued and replaced by another Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield plan with a lower deductible and an overall cost increase of 2.4%.

The Medicare Advantage plan also may change as the Town's insurance broker is recommending moving from an MVP plan to an Excellus plan. There was discussion about meeting with the broker to further discuss the proposed plan change.

NYS training for elected officials – Supervisor Forbes announced that the 2014 Training School for newly elected and re-elected officials is being offered by the Association of Towns on January 8th through 10th in Rochester.

Seasonal roads – On motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Town of Homer Highway Superintendent John R. Phelps has designated certain Town highways and portions of Town highways as seasonal limited use highways and is hereby authorized by the Homer Town Board to temporarily discontinue snow and ice removal and maintenance on those Town highways and portions thereof from December 1st, 2013, to April 1st, 2014 as follows:**

Foster Road	.50 miles
Burhans Road	.50 miles
Wolf Road	.25 miles
Grange Road	.75 mile from Rice Road to Brake Hill Road
Brake Hill Road	.50 miles
Rice Road	.50 miles
Carroway Hill Rd	.25 miles
McDonald Road	.25 miles
Sessions Hill Rd	2.50 miles
Vern King Road	entire length
Maxson Road	1.70 miles from Sessions Hill
Forbes Road	.80 miles
Chapman Road	1.00 miles
Searls Road	.50 miles
Dillon Road	.25 miles

Budget adjustment – On motion by Councilman Young, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the 2013 Town budget be adjusted to equal the amount of State CHIPS money actually received by the Town as follows: estimated revenue for the State CHIPS funds (DB3501) be increased by \$50,405.57 to \$150,405.57, and appropriations for CHIPS expenditures (DB5112.2) be increased by the same amount to \$150,405.57.**

DECALS changes – Town Clerk Jebbett reported that the NYSDEC will be making changes to the Conservation license program and is offering mandatory training for the new computer program. On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Weddle and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Town Clerk Jebbett be authorized to attend DECALS training at the Lafayette Town Hall on Thursday, December 5th.**

Hunting badges – Town Clerk Jebbett showed the Board a framed collection of hunting license badges dating from 1925 to 1941 that had been donated to the Town in 1979 by Howard Schweirs and Kathryn Allis, his daughter and a former Deputy Town Clerk. It was recently re-framed by Vicky Delaney of Cortland Picture Frame.

TOWN HISTORIAN

Town Historian Martin Sweeney reviewed his annual written report with the Town Board. He reported that the Town Board minutes from the 18th and 19th centuries and other old Town records have been scanned by Sue and Ron Clark of Elbridge. They have made them available on a flash-drive which will be downloaded to the Town's website in the near future.

Sweeney presented the Board with a copy of his book, Death in the Winter Solstice: A Narrative of a True Murder Mystery in Homer. It was published by the Cortland County Historical Society, with all proceeds to go to them.

He reported on his eight public speaking engagements as well as a presentation he gave at the Association of Public Historians of NYS. Sweeney has also developed three different walking tours, with help from Kathy Beardsley, which benefit the Center for the Arts – Historic Homer, Glenwood Cemetery, and Haunted Homer Tours.

While preparing to move from her Warren Street home, Janet Pugh discovered a rattan upholstered seat from a Cortland Traction Company's streetcar in her basement and has donated it to the Town. Historian Sweeney showed the item to the Board and suggested that it become part of a future museum at the Center for the Arts.

Sweeney explained that he was still pursuing the idea that the Town's influential citizens and "Homer's gifts" to President Abraham Lincoln – Carpenter, Stoddard & DeVoe - be commemorated in statuary. He showed the Board a DVD presentation of a concept by New York City sculptor Frank Porcu for a sculpture to be placed on the Village Green.

The Board thanked him for all his hard work over the past year.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent John Phelps thanked the Town Board for their support during the recent election.

Phelps reported that over the past month they have received all the salt that was originally ordered, replacing some borrowed from the County. Salt and sand are mixed, and trucks are ready for the snow season. There was discussion about hiring extra help for snowplowing.

The crew has repaired the shoulders on Phelps Road and Phelps is continuing to work on cleaning up Hights Gulf Creek.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk