

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, July 6, 2016, in the board room of the Town Hall building was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., 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

Michael R. Park, Councilman

OTHERS PRESENT

Priscilla Berggren-Thomas, Director, Phillips Free Library
Margaret Little, board member, Phillips Free Library
Linda Jones, Cortland County legislator
Donald Ferris, reporter, The Homer News

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 8th regular meeting were approved as presented, on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

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

ANNUAL REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board was:

1. The Tax Collector's return document of uncollected Town & County taxes for 2016, returned to the County for collection.

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 #141 through #169, except for #168, totaling \$56,000.95 are approved for payment.**

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried, Supervisor Forbes and Councilmen Williams and Jones voting in the affirmative and Councilman Warren abstaining: **RESOLVED: that General voucher #168 totaling \$266.95 for Warren Refrigeration is approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #98 through #116 totaling \$130,346.10 are approved for payment.**

OLD BUSINESS

Speed limit reduction request Cosmos Hill Road – Supervisor Forbes said that a request to lower the speed limit on Cosmos Hill road from 55 mph to 40 mph has been sent to both the County Highway Department and the State Department of Transportation.

Forbes has contacted the County Sheriff's Department regarding a complaint from East River Road about speeding and they agreed to install a solar speed limit sign and to send patrol cars from time to time to monitor the situation.

Worker's compensation insurance – Forbes reported that he and Councilman Williams spent much time looking into obtaining private worker's compensation insurance which, with additional documentation, may be an option in the future. However, they decided it was in the Town's best interest to remain with the Cortland County Self-Insurance Plan for the time being.

Dog shelter inspection – Supervisor Forbes reported that the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets has completed an inspection of Country Acres Pet Services shelter and it has been found to be satisfactory.

Tax collection report – Town Clerk Jebbett reported that the Town had collected 91.86% of the 2016 Town & County tax bills, up from 90.31% from last year. There were also fewer returned bills, 120 bills down from 131 in 2015.

Town Hall internet upgrade – On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the proposal from Plan First Technologies to upgrade and isolate the Town's networks is accepted up to the proposed cost of \$1,182.29.**

This would be a continuation of work completed in April and May to update and improve internet access in the Town Hall. A high-speed fiber-optic internet network considered over a year ago does not now appear to be an option.

Assessor committee – Supervisor Forbes reported that Fran Armstrong has agreed to join the committee to select the next Assessor for the Towns of Virgil and Homer and the City of Cortland, as long as her health allows her to do so. Assessor Randy Deal will be retiring in the fall.

Solar energy projects – Attorney Snyder reported that the Town Planning Board is close to making recommendations to the Town Board on revising the Town's comprehensive plan and zoning law for potential commercial solar energy projects. There was much discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

Liability insurance – Supervisor Forbes said that once again it is time for the Town to renew the liability insurance and asked Board members to review the various insurance schedules prior to the August 3rd board meeting. The renewal date is August 19th.

Military medical clinic/Healthy Cortland event – Forbes reminded the Board of an invitation to the Homer Intermediate School on July 20th for an overview of the free medical clinic being offered by the County and the U.S. Military as a service to the community and as a training exercise for military medical personnel.

Letter of resignation – Supervisor Forbes reported that a letter of resignation has been received from John Lansdowne, a Highway Department employee.

PHILLIPS FREE LIBRARY

Margaret Little, a member of the board of the Library, gave a presentation about the numerous activities now available at the Library for children, teenagers and adults. Significant changes have been made- the children's room has now been moved downstairs and a "maker's space" has been added for all sorts of activities. Director Berggren-Thomas said that they are proud of their partnership with the Homer School System and of the continued support that they receive from the community and the Town of Homer.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps reported that he is now short of help since both Robin Schmidt and John Lansdowne have found other employment. Seasonal employee Dan Fox has been able to fill in. Although he has been short on help all the neighboring Towns and the Village have cooperated to help complete everyone's road projects.

The CHIPS projects that Phelps had planned for the summer are now almost complete – re-surfacing of Carroway Hill Road, Brake Hill Road, Creal Road flats, and a portion of Mead Road. He will be sealing those roads in the near future.

Phelps said that he is waiting on a quote for the concrete work that needs to be completed for replacing the Wall Street Bridge. Supervisor Forbes said that he will be scheduling a meeting of all interested parties for next week about the bridge, including representatives from the Village, former Mayor Mary Alice Bellardini and Town Historian Martin Sweeney, John Phelps, and former Street Department Superintendent Bob Lottridge.

Councilman Warren said that he and Councilman Park will be meeting soon with Village Trustees to discuss the possibility of combining the Town and Village highway departments following the recent departure of the Village Street Superintendent. Board members and Superintendent Phelps agreed that currently the Town and Village work very well together on projects and sharing equipment on occasion. However, the cost savings involved in combining departments was questioned.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Linda Jones reported on a busy month at the County. She said that the County has accepted the gift of 73 acres in Cortlandville, but is not obligated to use it for a jail. The age to purchase tobacco products has been raised from 18 to 21 in Cortland County, effective as of October 1st. Jones also commended County Legislator James Denkenberger (Cuyler, Solon & Truxton) for being the first to promote the free medical clinic being offered to County residents by the military in a couple of weeks.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Jones, and carried unanimously, it was resolved to enter into an executive session at 7:55 p.m. to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones, and carried unanimously, the executive session was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

No action was taken. The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk