

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, October 4, 2017, 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
Michael R. Park, 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

OTHERS PRESENT

Linda Jones, Cortland County Legislator
Nick Graziano, reporter, Cortland Standard

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

The minutes of the September 6th regular meeting were approved as presented, on motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Jones 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 September.
2. The Supervisor's monthly report of all receipts and disbursements for August.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued for September.
4. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for August and September.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #194 through #213 totaling \$22,121.52 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #161 through #174 totaling \$51,181.36 be approved for payment.**

Community Development fund bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Community Development Fund voucher #4 totaling \$4,000.00 be approved for payment.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Jones, and carried unanimously, it was resolved to enter into an executive session at 6:35 p.m. to discuss the employment history of particular persons. No action was taken.

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously, it was resolved to adjourn the executive session at 6:50 p.m.

2018 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Supervisor Forbes presented copies of the tentative budget that, as budget officer, he is proposing for 2018. He said that it includes a 1.8% increase in pay for most General Fund employees, except for the Justice Court clerks who will each be receiving a \$.50 increase. Forbes has moved \$400,000 in sales tax revenue to the General Fund "A" account to cover the anticipated cost of the Town Hall renovation, with the Highway Fund "DB" account to cover the difference with fund balance. He said that he budgeted the same total amount of sales tax as he used for the 2017 budget, a decrease from what was budgeted in previous years.

Forbes asked the Town Board to consider the Phillips Free Library request for an increase prior to the adoption of the final budget. He will be discussing a raise for the Assessor Clerk with the City of Cortland and the Town of Virgil by November. An hourly wage increase for the Highway Department employees will also be discussed at the November meeting.

Forbes also said that he is waiting on a final amount for the Fire District contract which has yet to be negotiated between the District and the Village of Homer.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Park and carried, Councilmen Jones, Park, Warren and Williams voting in the affirmative, and Supervisor Forbes opposed: **Resolved: that the Town Supervisor's salary be increased by \$2,000 from \$6,000/year to \$8,000/year, the first increase in 11 years.**

On motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the tentative budget is hereby adopted as the preliminary budget for 2018, with an increase of \$2,000 for the Supervisor, and with the understanding that a few issues remain unresolved, and that a public hearing on the budget will be held on Wednesday, November 8th, at 6:30 p.m.**

OLD BUSINESS

Bridge repair - Supervisor Forbes said he has budgeted for 2018 to repair the Hights Gulf Road and Ayers Road bridges, and tentatively the Pine Street Bridge. The Town is planning to apply for a Bridge NY grant sometime in 2018 for replacement of the Wall Street Bridge.

Highway Superintendent Phelps explained that the eye-beams for the Hights Gulf Road Bridge need some attention. He plans to hire an engineer to look it over to see if repairs could wait until the spring. He said that the Ayers Road Bridge has similar issues that he is planning to address next year.

Town Hall Renovation – Supervisor Forbes explained that he, Councilman Warren and Clerk Jebbett had met with Architect Randy Crawford to re-work the Assessor Office space. Crawford will be providing a new sketch which should be the final plan.

Forbes said that prior to the Village moving in, he and Councilman Warren had arranged to have the north front office re-painted and new carpet installed, at the suggestion of the Clerk.

Forbes also reported that Beard Electric has installed several new outlets for the south front office. The Village will be paying Beard Electric for installing cabling for their computers and internet-based phones. Office hours and signage will be discussed with the Village in the near future.

Health insurance – Supervisor Forbes has been informed that Excellus BCBS will be cancelling the Town's current dental insurance plan. Forbes and Councilman Williams have met with current insurance broker Bill Chamberlain of the Finger Lakes Group, LLC, to inform him of the offer by the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium, GTCMHIC. He was unable to offer a comparable price, but will continue to work with the Town to present an alternative dental plan and a Medicare Advantage plan for older employees and retirees.

Banking – Supervisor Forbes asked the Board to take into consideration the free space provided to the Landmark Society in the Key Bank for a display of Homer history and historical items when deciding whether or not to change banks.

Housing grant – On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board approves the first applicant for the Town's 2016 Community Development Housing Rehabilitation Program, for a rehab project of \$29,475.**

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps reported that they have wrapped up their main projects for the season. They have completed painting the garage and fuel tanks, and winterizing the trucks. They plan to have the salt and sand mixed for winter road maintenance next week. Phelps said that they recently helped the Village re-surface Albany Street to the Town line, and plan to replace the culvert pipe under the end of Hunter Lane this month.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Linda Jones reported that it is possible that there will be a big changeover on the Legislature following this November's election. She discussed the County budget negotiations, the receipt of CHIPS aid for the Highway Department, and a raise in the pavilion rental fees at Dwyer Park. She also said that, at no cost to the County, a solar company will be exploring the possibility of using County-owned land for the placement of solar panels.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk