

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, November 8, 2017, in the board room of the Town Hall building was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., at 6:45 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
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT

Patrick Clune, Village Trustee
Linda Jones, County Legislator
Kelly Preston, County Legislator-elect
Martin Sweeney, Town & Village Historian
Nick Graziano, reporter, Cortland Standard
Donald Ferris, reporter, The Homer News

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 4th 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 report of all receipts and disbursements for October
2. The Supervisor's report of all receipts and disbursements for September and October.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued in October.
4. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for the month of October.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General vouchers #214 through #245 totaling \$19,967.41 be approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway vouchers #175 through #208 totaling \$89,751.16 be approved for payment.**

Community Development Fund bill was approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Community Development Fund voucher #5 totaling \$14,212.50 be approved for payment.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously, it was resolved to enter into an executive session at 6:47 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, the executive session was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Cleaning balcony area of Town Hall – On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the quote from Advantage Cleaners for the cleaning of the balcony area for \$156.00 is accepted.**

The quote covers mainly vacuuming after the Town employees clear out the space.

Thoma Development – On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the following properties are hereby approved to participate in the Town of Homer's Housing Rehabilitation Grant project: 13 Elm Avenue and 1 Michael Street in the Village, and 5335 East Homer Crossing Road in the Town.**

Court audit – Councilman Williams said that he and Councilman Jones plan to complete an audit of the Court records by the end of November.

Dental insurance – Supervisor Forbes said that he expects to be hearing soon from insurance broker Bill Chamberlain on a new dental plan. The current plan has been cancelled as of the end of the year by Excellus Blue Cross-Blue Shield.

New health insurance policy – Clerk Jebbett reported on a meeting with the representatives from the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium, Excellus Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Pro-Act Pharmacy Services regarding the Town's new health insurance plan.

Town Hall Office renovation – Supervisor Forbes reported that he had just received the preliminary proposal from Architect Randy Crawford for his services to design, prepare for bids, and oversee the proposed renovation of the Town Hall office space. He suggested holding a special meeting to go over the proposal.

HISTORIAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Town and Village Historian Martin Sweeney presented highlights of his lengthy annual report (on file), including a large tin box with the words "Homer Academy & Union School" painted on it that was found in the Village records vault in the basement of the Town Hall. He suggested donating it to the Homer Central School District and displaying it at the School's bicentennial in 2019. He showed the Board a recently donated 1829 bible owned by the earliest residents of Homer which he thinks may be the oldest bible in the county.

Sweeney also spoke about the lenticular truss bridges, the Historic District and donations for the Lincoln Monument Project.

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the Town Board accepts the 2017 annual report of the Town Historian, and makes note of the exceptional level of interest, attention to detail, and love of history that goes into his work.**

2018 TOWN BUDGET

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the proposed 2018 Town budget be modified as follows: the payment to the Phillips Free Library be increased by \$450 to \$36,500, and the amount to be collected on behalf of the Fire District is to be raised by \$2,000 to \$88,314.**

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Highway Superintendent Phelps updated the Town Board on repairs to the Hights Gulf Road Bridge which had been flagged. The engineering firm Barton & Loguidice has approved of the temporary repairs made. Phelps said that he will plan to make major repairs to the bridge after the end of the school year.

Phelps also reported that preparations for winter have been completed, and that the fuel shed and tanks have been re-painted. Phelps said that the Village will soon begin using the Town's gasoline tank, no longer used by the Town, as they had in the past.

Phelps said that long-time employee Dale Everts will be out through the end of the year due to eye surgery. He plans to fill in himself and keep temporary employee Andrew Stevens on through December.

The culvert pipe under Hunter Lane has been completely replaced, and new guard rail has been ordered. He said that there could be some carry-over of CHIPS money at the end of the year because he was unable to complete the Cosmos Hill Road project as originally planned.

Supervisor Forbes asked Phelps to contact an engineer regarding the Pine Street Bridge which has also been flagged. He suggested that the Town repair it while waiting for funding to replace the Wall Street Bridge.

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Attorney Pat Snyder said that according to County Highway Superintendent Phil Krey no "Bridge NY" projects will be awarded until the end of 2018 with construction to begin in 2019.

Snyder also informed the Town Board that the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board will be holding a joint meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 29th, in order to have a discussion with County Environmental Health engineer Mike Ryan on the minimum lot size, currently 2.4 acres to allow adequate space for well and septic systems. Lately there has been some confusion regarding lot sizes as the County has not discouraged smaller size lots as they had in the past, leaving it up to local Zoning Boards to make the decisions. Attorney Snyder encouraged Town Board members to attend the discussion, if they are interested.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Linda Jones introduced Kelly Preston, newly-elected to replace Gordon Wheelock in January 2018 in Legislative District 10.

Preston described herself as a long-time resident of Homer, in the Village and now in the Town of Homer. She said that she has had experience with County government, having worked in both in the County Clerk's Office and with the County Court system. She said that she is now retired and has a lot of time, enthusiasm and energy for the job of County Legislator.

Jones said with eight newly-elected legislators, she is hoping that things will improve in 2018. She reported on activities of the Legislature over the past month.

2018 TOWN BUDGET, CONTINUED

On motion by Councilman Park, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the revised preliminary budget is hereby adopted as the 2018 Town budget, with the tax rate for Village residents to be \$1.31 per thousand, and for Town residents \$1.74 per thousand, which includes a Fire District tax of \$.43 per thousand.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk