

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, May 2, 2018, 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  
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Linda Jones, Cortland County Legislator  
Chad Miller, student, TC3  
Nancy Ruscio, Homer Central School District Superintendent  
Michael Falls, Asst. Superintendent for Management  
Bernie Zolla, Technical Assistant  
Martin Sweeney, HCS Board member and Town Historian  
Julie McChesney, HCS Board member  
Patrick Clune, Trustee, Village of Homer  
Nick Graziano, reporter, Cortland Standard  
Brad Smith, reporter, WXHC  
Donald Ferris, reporter, The Homer News

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

**The minutes of the April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018, regular meeting were approved as presented,** on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Presented for audit by the Board were:

1. The Supervisor's report of all cash receipts & disbursements for March.
2. The Town Clerk's report of all cash receipts & disbursements for April.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued in April.
4. The status of funds report on the Homer Town Rehabilitation Program for April.

BILLS TO BE PAID

General bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General Fund vouchers #75 through #96 totaling \$21,904.59 are approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway Fund vouchers #58 through #75 totaling \$45,413.85 are approved for payment.** (Note: Voucher #57 transferred funds to FNB Dryden)

Community Development bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Community Development Fund voucher #22 totaling \$1,495.00 is approved for payment.**

## NEW BUSINESS

Town Hall Building – Supervisor Forbes asked Councilmen Park and Warren to take a look at the sidewalks in the front of the Town Hall. Winter plowing has left muddy ruts alongside the sidewalks and one area of the sidewalk is frequently underwater. Park and Warren agreed to see what can be done to improve the sidewalks and drainage, and will submit quotes along with their recommendations at the June Board meeting.

Supervisor Forbes also reported that a resident had recently fallen on her way out of the Town Hall and had hit her face on the railing, breaking some bones in her cheek. The incident has been reported to the Town's insurance company.

Wall Street Bridge – Supervisor Forbes reported that the final application to Bridge NY for a grant to replace the Wall Street Bridge was submitted on April 27<sup>th</sup>. The application included letters of support from the Village Mayor, the Homer Fire Department, State Senator James Seward, and an engineering certification from County Highway Superintendent Phil Krey.

Forbes also said that the Wall Street Bridge was recently red-flagged. He asked that Councilman Park and Highway Superintendent John Phelps look over the DOT report on the bridge and make recommendations for temporary repairs to the bridge. Supervisor Forbes asked about the possibility of Councilman Park being able to work on repairing the bridge, since he has experience with steel fabrication. Attorney Snyder said that because he is a member of the Town Board, the Town could not contract with him. However, he was not certain whether Park, a welder, could legally work as a subcontractor.

Health Insurance Consortium – Councilman Williams reported on his attendance at meetings of the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium. He said that it is now made up of 33 municipalities. They are continually looking to improve coverage and costs for municipalities, and are currently looking at a less than 4% increase in premiums, and no big changes to the Town's health insurance plan for next year.

LED Street Lighting – Williams said that due to the Consortium and other commitments, he no longer has time to look into a proposal to update all highway lighting to LED. Councilman Warren offered to work with the Village on the project in his place, and Councilman Jones said that he would work with him if needed.

Payment in lieu of taxes - For the first time the Town received a payment in lieu of taxes from the Cortland County IDA-BDC on behalf of the New York-Susquehanna Railroad due to increased rail traffic in 2016 & 2017.

Memorial Day Parade- Supervisor Forbes agreed to ask Highway Superintendent Phelps to again provide his horse-drawn wagon for the Town Board members to ride on during the May 28<sup>th</sup> parade.

Supervisor Forbes reported briefly on the following:

1. Cortland Community That Cares will be giving a presentation at the June 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.
2. Forbes, Phelps, and Town Clerk Jebbett attended a webinar presented by Spendgov.com which helps governments with purchasing. Forbes said the Town is too small to benefit from the service which costs \$3,000 to join.
3. The Town is all set to go ahead with Treasury Direct as a way to earn more interest on the Town's funds.
4. The June issue of "What's Hot", a local magazine, will feature the Town of Homer.

## HOMER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET

Nancy Ruscio, along with financial officer Michael Falls, gave a power-point presentation on the proposed school budget for 2018-2019 which will be up for a vote on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Supervisor Forbes congratulated Ruscio on her upcoming retirement and thanked her for all she has done to improve education in the Homer Schools.

## OLD BUSINESS

Worker's Comp Committee - Supervisor Forbes said that Patrick Quinn was no longer available to participate in a County committee on behalf of the Town.

On motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried, Councilman Jones, Warren, Williams & Supervisor Forbes voting in the affirmative, and Councilman Park abstaining:

**RESOLVED: that Councilman Park be appointed to the Worker's Compensation Committee to represent the Towns of Homer, Preble, Scott, and Truxton, and the Village of Homer, in discussions with Cortland County.**

Williams noted Park's expertise and knowledge of the subject.

Supervisor Forbes asked Park to attend a meeting of Town Supervisors and City & Village Mayors regarding the County's proposal for 2019 sales tax on May 9<sup>th</sup> on his behalf since he will be out of town.

New CDBG grant application – There was discussion about the application for a housing rehabilitation grant by James & Sally Gray, whose daughter-in-law, Betsy Gray, is a member of the Town's Planning Board.

Attorney Snyder said that HUD CDBG procedures require that the Town Board discuss a potential conflict in open session. However, he said that he can't imagine how there could be a conflict in this situation. Board members all agreed that there would be no conflict of interest involved if Mr. & Mrs. Gray were to obtain a housing rehab grant.

Town Hall Office Renovations – On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the bid of Steve Major, Lakeland Environmental, to perform a limited asbestos pre-demolition survey of the Town of Homer offices and former stage area for \$1,702 is accepted.**

The Board members discussed a quote they received from Beard Electronics for automatic door openers for the back doors of the Town Hall and two interior doors. Councilman Warren will look into getting additional quotes.

Forbes said that Architect Randy Crawford had visited a few times over the last month and continues to work on the specifications in preparation for going to bid on the office renovation project.

New high-voltage power line – There was much discussion regarding the proposal by NYSEG to run a new high-voltage power line from the Oakdale Mall area near Binghamton to LaFayette in Onondaga County, a portion of which is to run through the Town of Homer in the East Homer area.

Councilman Jones reported on a meeting he had attended in Truxton of residents concerned about the project and how it will affect their properties, led by Kathie Arnold and Lee Miller who are hoping to create opposition. Landowners involved have already been contacted by NYSEG representatives about agreeing to an easement. Jones voiced his concern that little could be done to prevent this project which has been in the works for a number of years.

Attorney Snyder agreed that residents may not be able to stop the project, but said that they may be able to have influence over the scope of the expansion. He also said that any properties taken by eminent domain must receive fair market value.

Supervisor Forbes had attended a meeting in Virgil on the same topic, as a landowner in the Town of Cortlandville, not on behalf of the Town of Homer. He said that he doesn't think it is a matter for the Town to take a stand on, but that he would welcome Kathie Arnold to give a presentation at the next meeting. Attorney Snyder agreed that a presentation at a Town meeting could provide a useful means of educating local residents about the project, but that the Town itself should not take a stand on whether any particular company involved or the project itself is good or bad. Councilman Park agreed that it was not a matter for local consideration, and that the State should be involved instead.

## COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Linda Jones reported on the activities of the County Legislature over the past month, including establishing Amnesty Week as May 14<sup>th</sup> through May 18<sup>th</sup> at the landfill for municipalities, adding two security officers at the County Office Building, and the completion of the County's audit by the State Comptroller's Office. She also reported that an anonymous donor had donated funds to help purchase supplies for renovations at Little York Park.

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

Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk