

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, June 6, 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
John R. Phelps, Highway Superintendent
Anita W. Jebbett, Town Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Kathie Arnold, Truxton resident and co-chair, Broome/Cortland/Onondaga Forest, Farm & Home Preservation Alliance (BCO Alliance)
Patrick Clune, Village of Homer Trustee
Randy Crawford, architect, Crawford & Stearns
Gary Lawrence, Mountainview Drive resident
Kelly Preston, Cortland County Legislator
Brad Smith, reporter, WXHC radio

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES

The minutes of the May 2, 2018, 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 Supervisor's report of all cash receipts & disbursements for April.
2. The Town Clerk's report of all cash receipts & disbursements for May.
3. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued in May.
4. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for the month of April.
5. The status of funds for the CDBG Housing Rehab project for the month of May.

POWERLINE EXPANSION

Kathie Arnold, co-chair of the BCO Alliance, explained that NYSEG & Avangrid, a European company, are proposing to build a 68.5 mile long high voltage transmission line from the Town of Onondaga to Oakdale, near Johnson City in Broome County, which will go through the local Towns of Truxton, Homer and Cortlandville. Landsmen hired by the power company have been securing easements for the transmission line. The BCO Alliance was formed by landowners who will be affected by the powerline in order to have some influence over the scope of the project and to insure that property owners are treated fairly.

Arnold asked the Town Board to consider holding a public hearing on the powerline for their constituents who are affected, and whether the Town Supervisor could be empowered to request an extension of the time allowed to review the application for the expansion from 30 days to 60 or 90 days. Supervisor Forbes noted that he may have a conflict of interest, as a property owner affected by the expansion. Attorney Snyder said that as yet it was too early in the process to schedule a public hearing. Arnold submitted a list of property owners in the Town of Homer who will be affected, and asked the Town to notify those property owners if they do hold a public hearing in the future.

She also invited Board members to attend a meeting of the BCO Alliance to be held in LaFayette on Saturday, June 9th. The Town Board thanked Arnold for her presentation and for bringing this matter to their attention.

MOUNTAINVIEW DRIVE PETITION

Gary Lawrence presented the Town Board with a petition signed by all residents of Mountainview Drive requesting a reduction in the speed limit to 10 miles an hour, and that a stop sign be placed at the end of Mountainview Drive at the point where it divides into Mountainview Drive East or West. Supervisor Forbes explained that in order to post a speed limit, the Town needs to get the permission of the NYS Department of Transportation. Lawrence said that Highway Superintendent Phelps had offered to place yellow speed limit signs that are a suggested speed limit, but not enforceable. If they continue to have issues, he asked that the Town Board consider their petition.

Lawrence also reported on the Kettle Lakes Association, of which he is a member. They are currently discussing the dredging of Little York Lake and working with Cortland County Soil & Water Conservation District on ways to solve continuing issues with the lake. The Town Board thanked him for the presentation.

TOWN HALL OFFICE RENOVATION PROJECT

Architect Randy Crawford presented preliminary drawings and bid specifications for the proposed renovation of the offices in the Town Hall. He said that it has taken him more time than he had originally thought because the project has been more complicated, and that his work is 85% complete. There was discussion about a few items to be bid as alternates, including adding a glass wall at the top of the front entrance stairs to reveal the large fan window on the front of the building, and adding HVAC updates to the two front offices, both of which were suggested by Supervisor Forbes.

After much discussion, it was decided to schedule a meeting with Crawford and Town Board members for the following week for a more detailed review of the proposed drawings and bid documents. Board members thanked Crawford for his time and efforts.

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 Fund vouchers #97 through #124 totaling \$73,480.09 are approved for payment.**

Highway bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway Fund vouchers #76 through #97 totaling \$171,399.97 are approved for payment.**

Community Development bills were approved as audited on motion by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilman Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Community Development Fund vouchers #23 through #26 totaling \$15,300.00 are approved for payment.**

NEW BUSINESS

New grant applicants – On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Supervisor Forbes is authorized to sign his approval of two more applicants for the Community Development Block Grant – Diane Purvis, 32 Grove Street, for \$11,760, and James & Sally Gray, 10 Water Street, for \$27,774.**

Family Health Network open house – Councilmen Williams and Jones agreed to attend an open house for the newly opened administrative offices of the Family Health Network, built in the Village of Homer on Route 281, scheduled for Wednesday, June 13th.

Land annexation – There was discussion about the Town annexing land currently in the Village near Carroway Hill Road that is currently landlocked, provided the property owner wants to pursue that possibility. The land was cut off by the construction of Route 81 and receives no amenities from the Village. Attorney Snyder reviewed the annexation procedure. Supervisor Forbes said that the matter would be discussed at the next Town Board meeting if the property owner decides to pursue that option.

Award for McMahon Farm – Supervisor Forbes informed the Board that McMahon’s E-Z Acres, a large dairy farm in the Town, has recently received a national award as the outstanding dairy farm for sustainability and protection of the watershed. Forbes explained that this was a huge deal, in particular for the Village of Homer and its clean water supply. He brought in a large notebook containing the CAFO plan for his own dairy farm, which, unlike the McMahon farm, is not located in a major aquifer, to give those present an idea of the paperwork involved in achieving that award. The local magazine, “What’s Hot”, will be featuring the McMahon’s farm.

OLD BUSINESS

Items remaining on Town Hall stage – Councilman Warren suggested that Architect Crawford look over doors, moldings, and other items remaining on the stage in case they can be re-used for the upcoming renovation project. Councilman Williams will look into selling or junking the remaining items.

Health insurance consortium letter – Supervisor Forbes shared a letter from the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium urging municipal boards to replace any of their current representatives to the Consortium that are unable or unwilling to consistently attend the meetings.

Town Hall improvements – Councilman Warren reported that he has met with a contractor regarding repairing and expanding the sidewalks in front of the Town Hall. He is attempting to obtain two quotes for the proposed job which is subject to the prevailing wage law.

Warren presented a quote for the installation of automatic door openers for the rear door of the Town Hall, the door into the Senior Center, and the door into the office level from two bidders: Beard Electric LLC, Cortland, for \$13,113.65; and Stanley Access Technologies, Homer, for \$7,320.00. Supervisor Forbes noted that this is something that the Town had promised the Village Board that would be installed to make the Town Hall more accessible.

On motion by Councilman Warren, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that the bid of Stanley Access Technologies to install automatic door openers to three doors in the Town Hall, contingent on review by Architect Crawford, for \$7,320 is accepted, with the Town to arrange the electrical service.**

Sales tax negotiations – Supervisor Forbes reported on the sales tax negotiations or lack thereof with the County. He explained a chart he had prepared which illustrates how the proposed reduction in County sales tax revenue to the Town would affect the Town’s budget. Forbes emphasized that there is room for compromise between the County, the City of Cortland, and the towns & villages.

Kelly Preston, one of Homer’s representatives on the County Legislature, said that while she was not on the sales tax committee, she intended to back their proposal. She discussed her suggestion for supporting the Tompkins-Cortland Community College.

Brad Smith, reporter for WXHC, noted the contentiousness at the sales tax meeting he had recently attended at the County Office Building.

Tax Collection – Town Clerk/Tax Collector Jebbett reported that over 92% of the Town & County taxes levied in the Town of Homer have been collected, slightly more than in 2017. Only 116 bills remain unpaid and will be returned to the County on Monday, June 11th.

Update on Town Hall injury – Clerk Jebbett said that the Town’s insurance company, Selective Insurance, has visited the Town Hall and has been in contact with the individual who fell on the front steps in late April.

Memorial Day parade – Village Trustee Clune thanked the Town Board for sharing their wagon ride with the Village Mayor and Trustees, and Aaron Forbes for driving the tractor. Supervisor Forbes praised the speech given by Town resident Kevin Walsh during the ceremony at the Glenwood Cemetery.

Village Recreation contract – On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Warren and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Supervisor Forbes is authorized to sign the 2018-2019 contract with the Village of Homer for support of their recreation programs in the amount of \$33,250, contingent upon some additional wording being added upon recommendation by the Town Attorney.**

Worker's Compensation Committee – Councilman Park reported on a meeting he had attended at the County Office Building as the representative for the Village and Town of Homer, and the Towns of Preble, Scott and Truxton on the county-wide committee and said that he was encouraged by the discussion.

TOWN BRIDGES

There was much discussion about the need to repair bridges in the Town. Supervisor Forbes said that both the Wall Street Bridge and the Pine Street Bridge have been red-flagged. Highway Superintendent Phelps said that he would completely block off the Pine Street Bridge, currently only being used as a pedestrian bridge, and place signage to prevent any foot traffic.

The engineering firm of Barton & Loguidice is reviewing the Wall Street Bridge red-flag and will be completing an analysis and proposing a repair in the near future.

Barton & Loguidice has designed the repairs needed to fix the Hights Gulf Road Bridge. Highway Superintendent Phelps said that they have yet to write up the specs and advertise for bids. Supervisor Forbes suggested that this be expedited in order to complete the repairs prior to school starting up again in the fall.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Superintendent Phelps reported that approximately \$135,000 of the \$253,000 to be received through the NYS CHIPS program has been spent on a top-coating of Cosmos Hill Road and Mountainview Drive. He plans to use a "cold mix" to top Tamarack Lane, Foster-Moore Road, and a remaining section of Harrison Road.

Phelps also reporting on sharing equipment and drivers with other Towns, the City of Cortland, and the State DOT. He has saved grindings from various projects to re-use for Town roads. All the sand for the winter months has been stock-piled. Other projects include cleaning out ditches around the Town, and installing a culvert pipe on Dillon Road and a tile on Dawson Road.

Phelps reported that he is very pleased with his current crew, including recently re-hired employee, John Lansdowne.

Councilman Jones thanked Phelps for his quick response to a complaint on Mountainview Drive.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR

County Legislator Kelly Preston gave an update of the activities of the various committees of which she is a member. She and others are continuing to review the governmental structure and policies of similarly-sized counties to see how Cortland County government can be improved, as they consider again hiring a County Administrator.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Warren, the Town Board entered into an executive session at 9:40 p.m. to discuss the employment history of a particular person. No action was taken.

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Park, the executive session was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Supervisor Forbes reminded the Board that the July meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 10th, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Anita W. Jebbett
Town Clerk