

Regular Meeting
November 3, 2021

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, November 3, 2021, in the Town Hall Senior Center was called to order by Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., at 7:06 p.m. social distancing was observed due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

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
Heather M. Hill, Town Clerk
Brooke L. Poli, Town Deputy Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Martin Sweeney, Town Historian
Chris Spadolini, Cortland County Recycling Coordinator
Brian Horan, Town of Homer Resident
Michael Barlyski, Cortlandville Resident
Victor Siegle, Homer Village Resident
Liz Arnold, Homer Village Resident
Don Ferris, Homer News
Patrick Clune, Trustee Village of Homer

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 6th, 2021 were approved as presented, on motion by Councilmember Warren, seconded by Councilmember 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 Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued for October.
3. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for October.
4. The Supervisor's report of all financial activities through October.

BILLS TO BE PAID

Highway bills were approved as audited by councilmember Jones, motioned by councilmember Jones, seconded by councilmember Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway Fund vouchers #146 through #167 totaling \$40,419.38 are approved for payment.**

General bills were approved as audited by councilmember Warren, motioned by councilmember Warren, seconded by councilmember Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that General Fund vouchers #196 through #211 totaling \$9,896.71 are approved for payment.**

TOWN HISTORIAN

Martin Sweeney presented his six-page 2021 Town Historian's Annual Report (**attached**) in which he outlined his various activities over the past year including his first in-person meeting since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic was on April 12, 2021. Three other office visits occurred, including on July 16, when Ed Raus of Homer came to discuss his new book manuscript. He provided Martin with a copy to peruse and edit to see if it accomplished what he hopes it will do. This is the text that goes with his unique compendium of all Civil War soldiers (over 1600) from Cortland County. No book has yet been published that details the county's role at home and in battle from 1861-1865. It will be an awesome reference book for teachers of U.S. history in the county and in Central New York. Martin said, "He wished that he had this book while he was teaching as there was stuff in there that would blow your mind."

On February 26, Sweeney received an email request from the president of the Landmark Society for information or images of any trolley waiting stations that may have existed in Homer. This could help in the design of a bus shelter in Homer.

March 30th, a special Board Meeting to accept resignations of Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk. Town Clerk Anita Jebbett has worked for local government for 40 years, and her great-grandfather and grandfather also had served as Homer Town Clerk when it was an elected position. It is the end of an era.

Mr. Sweeney also shared a plastic coffee cup that he brought in from McDonalds to illustrate that this is a future artifact with the saying, "We can do this, protect yourself and the people you Love - Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). To learn more" He wrote on the cup the year 2021, in hopes that someone after him will realize that we had plastic and way too much of it and also survived a pandemic. "End of Report, thank you for all of your time". – Martin Sweeney.

The Town Board thanked Martin for all his efforts and Mr. Forbes told Martin that he was irreplaceable. Motioned by Councilmember Williams, seconded by councilmember Park and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: to receive Mr. Sweeney's historian annual report and file.**

CORTLAND COUNTY RECYCLING COORDINATOR

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., introduced the new Cortland County Recycling Coordinator Chris Spadolini. Mr. Spadolini presented multiple pamphlets with his business card attached to the board and to keep in the Town clerk's office to share with the public. The pamphlets are equipped with informative information about what is and what is not recyclable. Mr. Spadolini made it a point to offer his assistance and call anytime with questions and concerns or visit www.cortland-co.org. This position that he has taken has been vacant for the past two years and he is working to educate the public on what is recyclable and what is non-recyclable in order to keep the taxes from going up. Mr. Spadolini thanked the board for their time and the town board thanked him for his presentation.

SOLAR ENERGY

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., said he would like to address the solar issue. It his intention to not bring it to the floor for a vote tonight. The main intention is that, two years ago when we started down this road he put together in one room the Town of Solon, the Town of Cortlandville and the assessor and stated he needed to move forward collectively with this. The Town of Solon opted out and the Town of Homer and Cortlandville came together and came up with the seven thousand dollar per megawatt. Mr. Forbes would like to get the Town of Cortlandville back together so we all are on one page along with the assessors and attorneys for the Town's. He can't thank Victor enough for stressing the issue because without him they would have gone with a quote a while ago that was too low. He also thanked everyone that has spoken at the public hearings. This has become a real working progress.

2022 Town Budget

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., stated that he made changes to two items in the budget from the last board meeting but it does not affect the tax rate. With the concerns of our Highway Superintendent, almost every town around has increased their wages for truck drivers. There is such a huge storage for truck drivers, the starting wages for truck drivers that is posted is well over what the six people that plow our roads are currently making. Supervisor Forbes has increase the personal figures in Highway (DA) Total Town and (DB) Town Outside the village increased those numbers by 15,500 in each category. He has balanced this with the seeing the third quarter sales tax projections and knowing what he is going to get and with the gas prices staying up and everything going up sales tax revenues that are coming into the town will be sufficient to cover the increases. They normally do the raises for the Highway guys in December, he thinks that we can still do that but he wanted to make everyone aware of the changes and why he made the changes. On motion by Supervisor Forbes seconded by councilmember Williams and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: To move his 18th prepared budget forward with the tax rate of a \$1.32, a fire tax rate which was voted on by the fire district of \$1.00, bringing the total tax rate to \$2.32 for town residents outside the village.**

TOWN HALL FURNACE

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., asked Councilmember Warren for an update on the furnace. Barry Warren stated he met with Mr. Baker that installed the furnace to discuss a complication with some of the heating that went to the village mayor's office, the hallway, the court room and Mr. Foley's office. They ran test and discovered there was a bad pump. Councilmember Warren purchased the pump and installed this himself. All the heat is back up and running.

TOWN HALL CAMERAS & CLERK'S COMPUTERS

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., asked Councilmember Williams to comment on the cameras and computers. Councilmember Williams stated that he would like to meet with the clerk's tomorrow afternoon when he comes into the office to audit the bills. The camera's he has not received any quotes, he stated that a lot of people have been having trouble receiving products. He is in hopes to have something for the Board by next month.

BUILDING PERMIT FEES

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., told the Board that the clerk's did tremendous job preparing the building permit fees that were handed out. Supervisor Forbes asked the Board to look them over and have comment relative for the December meeting as to whether this is what we will pass or not.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION QUOTES

Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., informed the board that he was contacting by Comp Alliance this year and asked if we wanted them to rebid. Two years when the Town went away from the county and went on their own we received two bids from Comp Alliance and PERMA. PERMA was cheaper at that time. Bailey Place reached out to PERMA at Supervisor Forbes's request. PERMA's first price was \$17,906 (**attached**). Comp Alliance was \$16,370 (**attached**). Due to the difference Jeremy from Bailey's Place reached out to PERMA asking if they would like to rebid this. PERMA came back with a two year bid of \$15,067 (**attached**). Supervisor Frederick J. Forbes Sr., told the board that this has been a tremendous savings to the Town. On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by councilmember Park and carried unanimously: **RESLOVED: Lock in the two year PERMA figure of \$15,067 which needs to be signed and returned by November 17, 2021.**

ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN

Patrick M. Snyder, Attorney for the Town suggested to add the Planning and Zoning Board fees to the Building Permit Fees list as there has been some confusion in the past and believes this

would be very helpful. The Clerk's will add Cortlandville, Homer Village and Virgil's Planning and Zoning Fees to this list for comparison.

Mr. Snyder stated that he read in the newspaper that the Referendum on opting out of the New York State Cannabis Law Article 4 was defeated. With that being the case it will not become Law so Local Law #3 will become null and void. Solar Opt out Law although the name of it is Proposed #4 2021 will become Local Law #3 if adopted this year.

He received a formal petition on the Suites Annexation. He believes that the next step is for the Village and Town of Homer to hold a hearing that the village will set up at their next board meeting. He stated that it is not necessary for the full board to attend. Supervisor Forbes noted that the Village holds their public hearings by ZOOM. Patrick Clune, Trustee Village of Homer stated that everyone from the village is on board it's just a matter of going through the proper procedures.

Mr. Forbes told Mr. Snyder that he was contacted by the media and was asked what the Boards plan was going forward with the Cannabis Law. He told the media that the Board has no formal plans. It is his understanding from previous discussions that if they wanted to they could restrict zoning but that is all we can do. We certainly cannot stop it. Mr. Snyder told him that is correct and the Towns are allowed to put reasonable restrictions as to the place where these two activities that could have been prohibited mainly Cannabis retail dispensaries and on-site cannabis consumption sites would have to amend the zoning law and follow the same process you followed before when it's been amended to pass the local law.

SEASONAL ROADS DESIGNATION

On motion by Supervisor Forbes, seconded by Councilman Williams and carried unanimously:
RESOLVED: List in the Cortland Standard that Town of Homer Highway Superintendent John R. Phelps has designated certain Town highways and portions of Town highways as seasonal limited use highways and is hereby authorized by the Homer Town Board to temporarily discontinue snow and ice removal and maintenance on those Town highways and portions thereof from December 1st, 2021, to April 1st, 2022 as follows:

Foster Road	.50 miles
Burhans Road	.50 miles
Wolf Road	.25 miles
Grange Road	.75 mile from Rice Road to Brake Hill Road
Brake Hill Road	.50 miles
Rice Road	.50 miles
Carroway Hill Rd	.25 miles
McDonald Road	.25 miles
Sessions Hill Rd	2.50 miles

Vern King Road	1.25 miles from house #5937 to Sessions Hill Road
Maxson Road	1.70 miles from Sessions Hill
Forbes Road	.87 miles
Chapman Road	.75 miles
Searls Road	.50 miles
Dillon Road	.25 miles

OTHER

Councilmember Williams made a suggestion to the board as to start making a rotating schedule for all councilmembers to audit bills. Supervisor Forbes explained the full monthly bill auditing process. Mr. Forbes told the board that Councilmember Williams has it down to a pretty good science. It's just a different format for the town board members to get an eye on it and look at it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.