

Regular Meeting
December 8, 2021

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Homer held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, in the Town Hall Senior Center was called to order by Michael R. Park acting Town Supervisor, at 6:30 p.m. Social distancing was observed due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

PRESENT

Frederick J. Forbes, Sr., Supervisor – Remote
Michael R. Park, Deputy Supervisor & Councilman
Larry R. Jones, 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

Kevin Smith – Cortland Voice
Kevin McMahon, Code Enforcement Officer
John Phelps – Highway Superintendent
Randolph Van Kruman – Homer Town Justice
Pat Clune – Village Trustee

PLEDGE

RECORDING OF MINUTES – Michael R. Park discussed the auto recording of the Town Board meetings to better assist the clerks in minute taking. Mr. Park talked about the destruction of the recordings via the New York State retention law, can be deleted after a four-month period. On motion, by councilmember Park, seconded by councilmember Warren, with three ayes, one nay and carried **RESOLVED: To approve the audio recording of the Town Board meeting minutes and the destruction of the recordings via the New York State retention law.**

Town Clerk Hill conducted the swearing in of all the re-elected officials for the beginning of their new term of office: John Phelps, Highway Superintendent; Randolph Van Kruman, Town Justice; Barry Warren, Councilman; and Kevin Williams, Councilman.

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 3rd Public Hearings for The Town Budget and Solar Energy Project & November 3rd Regular Meeting 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 November.
2. The Code Enforcement Officer's report of all building permits issued for November.
3. The Dog Control Officer's report of all activities for November.
4. The Supervisor's report of all financial activities through November.

BILLS TO BE PAID

Highway bills were approved as audited by councilmember Williams, motioned by councilmember Williams, seconded by councilmember Jones and carried unanimously: **RESOLVED: that Highway Fund vouchers #168 through #196 totaling \$131,820.14 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 #212 through #239 totaling \$51,558.79 are approved for payment.**

TOWN JUSTICE COURT UNCLAIMED EXONERATED BAIL CHECK – Mr. Park told the Board that they received a check from the Town Justice Court for unclaimed exonerated bail in the amount of \$1,300.00 which was deposited into the General Fund and Mr. Forbes will put it against the appropriate line.

BUILDING PERMIT FEES – Mr. Park discussed the building permits fees with the Town Board stating that they touched on this last month (**attached**) to raise the fees to be in line with Cortlandville and Village of Homer. Mr. Park asked Kevin McMahan, Code Enforcement Officer if he would like to discuss the fees with the Board. After reviewing the various fee sheets and comparing prices councilmember Williams stated he would like some time to review them all and rediscuss in January. Mr. McMahan stated that his objective is to not only make his job easier but to get the building permits a little more up to date with comparison to the other towns. Mr. Forbes mentioned to the Town Board that they might consider not taking building permit fees for the year 2022. He stated that the mortgage income for the Town outside the Village was about \$40,000 over budget.

WEDDING BARN – Kevin Mc Mahon presented a copy of the Virgil Local Law for the allowance of “Wedding barns/event centers” for the Town Boards review. Mr. McMahan stated he would like the Town Board to consider adopting something similar for existing buildings for functions and events. He also stated that no type of “event center” would be allowed without meeting the criteria of the New York State fire and building codes, which in most occasion would deem most projects and old barns cost prohibitive. Since we have no local law in place for Agriculture districts for wedding barns, he thought it would be helpful to the Town Board to see what Virgil as done to use as a template. Mr. McMahan stated that he has been talking with the residents up on Rice Road and told them he would bring this in front of the Town Board to concern making Local Law. There are strict criteria that goes with a use variance for event centers. Mr. Forbes stated that they have known for a while now that the residents of Rice Road are out of compliance and Mr. McMahan has us on the right road to take the Town on the right path. Mr. Snyder stated that as this seems to be an urgent matter, to have both the Town Board and Planning Board start discussing the possibly of adopting a local law for event centers and try to come to a joint discuss on what is best for the Town and further discuss at the February meeting.

12/30 MEETING – Mr. Park asked the Town Board whether they should have the December 30th, end of the year meeting. Mr. Forbes stated that he thought it would be easier to have the meeting the first week of January and save a meeting. After much discussion, the Town Board decided to go ahead and conduct a December 30th, end of the year meeting at twelve noon.

NEW ZBA BOARD MEMBERS – Mr. Park reported to the Town Board that there are two new members of the ZBA Board. Ryan Dubois, resident of the Village of Homer and Rhea Robinson, resident of Kinney Gulf Road. These names were brought forward to Fred Forbes from Gary Lawrence and Lindsay Anderson. Mr. Forbes states they he thinks their names should be brought forth to start on January 1st, 2022.

On motion by councilmember Park, seconded by Williams and carried unanimously **RESLOVED: that Ryan Dubois become a member of the ZBA Board as of January 1st, 2022.**

On motion by councilmember Park, seconded by Warren and carried unanimously **RESLOVED: that Rhea Robinson become a member of the ZBA Board as of January 1st, 2022.**

BUILDING A WIND BREAK ON THE NORTH SIDE REAR ENTERANCE – Mr. Park started the discussion about building a wind break on the North side entrance of the Town Hall due to snow build up which blocks the door. Mr. Forbes stated that the North wind comes through there frequently. The village plows the parking lot, if there was a wall there it would be easier on the plow operator. After much discussion, the Board decided to have the Highway employees make a temporary wall (seasonal) for the rear entrance.

HIGHWAY PERSONAL RAISES – John Phelps Highway Superintendent told the Board that he cannot afford to lose any more employees as they have a lot to do. He discussed this with Supervisor Forbes that they need to push up the raises and make them all the same rate. Andrew DeSimone, Jeff Stiles, Dan Fox and Charles Ford rates be at \$20.00. John Lansdowne is now the Deputy Highway Superintendent rate will be \$20.50. David McEvoy rate is \$24.00 because he is not enrolled in the Town Health Insurance.

On motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by councilmember Jones and carried unanimously **RESOLVED: To adopt the Highway Employee rate raise schedule.**

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS FOR TOWN HALL – Mr. Park asked the Town Board if they were all in agreement to approve up to \$300.00 dollars to spruce up the Town Hall during the holiday season. On motion by councilmember Warren, seconded by councilmember Jones with three ayes, one nay and carried **RESOLVED: To spend up to \$300.00 on Christmas decorations of the Town Hall.**

FUTURE OF SENIOR CENTER – Mr. Park made mentioned to the Board that it was time to set up a committee of a couple Town Board and Village members to discuss the possibility of the police department and seniors using the facility at the Town Hall. Mr. Forbes stated that he believes after reconfigurations there is enough room to accommodate both the police department and seniors. On motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by Warren and carried unanimously **RESOLVED: To nominate Mike Park and Barry Warren to serve on a newly created and formed joint committee with the Village, soon to be named, on the merging of the Homer police department and senior center in the basement of the Town Hall.**

CNY BOARD BAND INTERNET STUDY- Mr. Park presented the CNY Infracation Maps to the Town Board stating that the internet companies are trying to close out the gaps in the areas where it is not available.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT – Mr. Phelps made mention that he went over a list with point band that they need to fix up the cable that is on top of cable. He told the Board that the shed is full of material and his help is in good standings. Mr. Phelps stated that their previous drug testing company fell through, he contacted who Cortlandville Highway uses, he is in the works in getting everyone retested as it has been over a year. All DOT medical certificates are current.

SOLAR MEETING UPDATE – Mr. Park informed the Board that he and councilmember Williams attended an informational solar meeting with Cortlandville, Solon, some assessors, lawyers, and Pat Snyder. Councilmember Williams stated that there was some consensus made about what to do with the three towns. Councilmember Williams stated that opting out may be the path to take. After much discussion the Town Board decided to make a decision at the January 2022 meeting on whether or not to opt out of the Solar Project. This gives all members the time to watch/listen to the Solar meeting via audio. Mr. Forbes is in hopes that Cortlandville and Homer move forward together on this Solar Project.

TOWN ATTORNEY - Mr. Snyder informed the Board that there was a joint public hearing on the Suites Annexation. Mr. Forbes stated that he also attended the meeting and there were no comments made. Pat Clune Village Trustee stated the Village approved this and were all good. Mr. Snyder stated that the Planning Board approved the subdivision contingent on the Town Board approving this annexation. On motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by councilmember Warren and carried unanimously **RESOLVED: To approve the petition made by Mr. Suites that the approximate one-half acre parcel of off Balmoral Way be annexed into the Village.**

CLERKS COMPUTERS – Heather Hill informed the Board that the computers came in on Monday this week and the clerk's made arrangements with Plan First to have them insulated Friday.

TAX COLLECTIONS – Mr. Park informed the Board that after talking with Mr. Forbes and the clerks, that a consensus was made to have the clerks collect the taxes rather than the bank this year. This will allow the clerks to get fully trained and make a future decision on whether they would involve the bank for tax collection next year.

TOWN HALL FURNANCE – Barry Warren updated the Board that he met with the gentleman that completed the plumbing as they were having troubles with the heat in the hallways. Warren said they added a switch that allows the heat to work properly. Warren stated that he ordered a part to fix the leak in the senior center.

Supervisor Forbes asked if there was any other business. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Heather M. Hill
Town Clerk