

Town Board Minutes
May 12, 2008

At a regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 12th day of May 2008, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

Supervisor JoAnn Trinkle
Councilwoman Carol Imhof
Councilman Frank Ziehm
Councilman Ted Berndt
Councilman Joel Nichols

Others present: Town Clerk Sally Eddy, Highway Supt. Eric Shaw, Code Enforcement Officer LaVerne Davis, Earl Kenyon, Robert McIntosh, Meaghan Wilkins, Dan Schmitt, Janine Stuchin, Paul Gruber, Evan Lawrence, Alex Bass, Rani Kronick, Jim Buckley, Dan Thomas & son

Supervisor Trinkle called the meeting to order and immediately led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Councilwoman Carol Imhof motioned, seconded by Councilman Frank Ziehm, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2008 meeting as mailed by the Town Clerk with no corrections or additions.

Vote: 4 – Ayes 0 – Noes (Councilman Joel Nichols was not present at the time of the vote.)

No Items to Add to Agenda

Supervisor's Report

1. The monthly financial reports were reviewed and commented upon. Supervisor Trinkle received notice from the bank that the interest rate has dropped to 1.5%.
Councilman Ted Berndt motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Carol Imhof, to approve the April general and highway financial reports as prepared by bookkeeper Margaret Shaw.
Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes
2. The Northeast Automotive Repair Garage located on County Route 74, which was the subject of complaints at the April Town Board meeting, has been inspected by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). DMV verified all operating permits are valid and DEC confirmed that all liquids are being handled properly with no spills. Among the complaints was the number of cars parked along the main road, County Route 74. The owner has corrected the situation by removing the vehicles.
3. Received notice from the Village of Cambridge that the wells at the old landfill will have to be monitored. Washington County went to bid and awarded the low bidder, Phoenix Environmental Labs, Manchester, CT, the job of testing all landfill wells in the county. There are six wells at the Cambridge site at a price of \$290 per well. The cost will be shared with the Towns of Jackson and White Creek. Testing will begin in May to provide a baseline scan. August and November will be regular routine scanning. Six rounds of testing are required which will last about 1 ½ years to complete. If no problems are found, then the testing may be reduced to once a year.

Town Board

Councilman Frank Ziehm stated he had in his possession copies of the land use regulations from the Town of Stephentown and thought they might be helpful in solving the subdivision controversy associated with the town's proposed Comprehensive Plan. Supervisor Trinkle stated she has a copy of the Town of Ft. Ann's Comprehensive Plan which might be helpful also.

Councilman Ted Berndt stated that the high speed internet committee has been getting signatures on a petition to send to Verizon supporting the implementation of DSL. They have met with Verizon's Planning and Budgeting staff to determine if the company has plans in the works to bring the high speed internet service to the town. Mr. Berndt said they are getting mixed messages, nothing definitive. Perhaps the petition will help influence them.

Supervisor Trinkle made a statement that no tax payer dollars are going to be used to implement DSL. The procedure is that Verizon will bill subscribers on a monthly basis for the service.

Town Clerk

Sally Eddy reported she attended the NYS Town Clerks Annual Meeting held in Saratoga Springs from April 28 – 30. Approximately 400 clerks were present. We had meetings with many of the agencies that we, as clerks, are responsible to, such as DEC for conservation licenses, Ag & markets for dog licensing, Department of Health for birth, death and marriage. There was a session for tax collectors, racing & wagering, NYS Retirement, Town Clerk duties, a notary refresher course, a class for those interested in becoming a notary as well as a test given. Bob Freeman spoke on the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Law. The NYS Board of Elections, NYS Archives and the NYS Comptroller each held classes. Clerk Eddy stated it was quite informative and thanked the board for the opportunity to attend.

Planning Board

Held their regular meeting on May 1 and addressed two issues:

1. Granted preliminary approval to Allen Bailey for a 3.26 acre subdivision bordering on Gannon and Center Cambridge Roads. Public hearing will be held on May 15, 7:30 PM.
2. Kim Davidson, who owns 103.4 acres on Conley Road, was granted sketch plan approval for a 3 – 4 acre subdivision which contains the only house on the property. The board had some boundary line distance questions so they went on site to inspect and, as a result, Ms. Davidson agreed to make some changes to the sketch plan. She was directed to proceed with the survey.
3. Secretary Sally Eddy stated she received the written resignation of Ave Gillis from the Planning Board.

Highway Superintendent

1. We finished grading the dirt roads and graveling where necessary. Calcium was also applied to all our dirt roads.
2. A number of culverts were replaced around the Town. The ditching was done with our own excavator.
3. The 1988 dump truck was sanded down and repainted.
4. Skin patching was done on a number of roads with one remaining to be done.
5. Wright Road and Stevenson Road were blacktopped.
6. CHIPS will be funding us \$117,321.71 this year. That's up from a total of \$94,000 last year. The total spent in 2008 for paving was \$134,146.48.
7. We used 770 gallons of diesel fuel during the month of April.
8. The 1994 truck is in need of a starter, oil pan and radiator.

No Code Enforcement Report

No Assessor's Report

Communications

1. Supervisor Trinkle received a letter from resident Robert McIntosh informing her of an opportunity to visit a successful recycling program that's operating in Burlington, Vt. A tour of the plant will take place on May 20, 2008.
2. Received another letter from a resident urging the county not to sell the transfer stations.

No Unfinished Business

New Business

Tobacco Resolution - Janine Stuchin, Project Manager of the Southern Adirondack Tobacco Free Coalition and Eric Kenyon, Reality Check Coordinator, Washington County, asked the Town Board to enact a non-binding resolution supporting a reduction in the visibility of tobacco advertisements and products in retail stores in order to protect our children's health and well being.

Resolution by Councilwoman Carol Imhof
Seconded by Councilman Joel Nichols

A Commitment to Children's Health

WHEREAS, tobacco use kills over 25,000 New Yorkers every year, yet is the leading preventable cause of death in our communities; and

WHEREAS, in New York State alone, the tobacco industry spends \$900 million annually to market its deadly products; and

WHEREAS, every day, another 4,000 American children start to smoke, and another 2,000 become regular, daily smokers; and

WHEREAS, in New York the average age at which smokers try their first cigarette is 14 ½, and

WHEREAS, tobacco advertising in retail stores has a powerful influence on teens, who are significantly more likely to smoke due to advertising than they are due to peer pressure; and

WHEREAS, research shows that kids are more than twice as likely as adults to recall tobacco advertising after two weeks than adults; and

WHEREAS, outdoor and exterior-facing tobacco ads at retail stores are so often seen by students walking to and from school; and

WHEREAS, retail stores are an integral part of our community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Cambridge hereby expresses its support of the efforts of the Southern Adirondack Tobacco Free Coalition and Reality Check of Washington County and encourages retailers to reduce overall tobacco advertising in their place of business and to eliminate advertising from areas likely to be seen by children, including wall space below five feet, near candy displays, and on counter tops.

Was duly put to vote and resulted in 5 – Ayes and 0 – Noes.

Planning Board Vacancy - Since Ave Gillis's resignation letter has been received, the board will advertise the vacancy in the local newspaper. Stuart Ziehm and Jim Buckley have already expressed an interest in serving on the Planning Board. However, the Town Board thought the best procedure would be to advertise the position to discern if anyone else in the Town is interested. All candidates will be interviewed at the June Town Board meeting.

Councilman Nichols motioned, seconded by Councilman Ziehm, to advertise for candidates to fill the Planning Board vacancy created by the resignation of Ave Gillis.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Memorial Day Parade - Will be held on May 26 starting at 10:00 AM.. All town officials who want to participate are asked to meet on Academy Street at 9:30 AM.

Privilege of the Floor

Resident Robert McIntosh urged the town to become more active in recycling papers in order to reduce carbon emissions and encouraged the highway department to develop a carbon plan and implement it when purchasing new equipment.

Comprehensive Plan Dialogue

Farmer Earl Horton asked what the Town is going to do with the Comprehensive Plan? He said the farmers have tried to talk to Committee Chairman Steve Sanford but he won't listen to them. Supervisor Trinkle stated the Committee is readdressing the Plan. Paul Gruber, a member of the Committee, said the plan is being revised and will be resubmitted.

Farmer Jim Buckley presented a letter to the Town Board read aloud by Supervisor Trinkle. The letter was signed by 16 farmers and large land owners. The letter expressed the signers objections to the subdivision portion of the Plan based on the grounds that it will have an adverse impact on farming in Cambridge and on the value of their land. They were concerned that the meetings were not advertised and felt they were excluded. The letter stated that as the Plan is in its final stages, the farmers are entering into their most intensive season and would be unable to attend meetings. They would feel disadvantaged if the Plan was finalized at this time.. Mr. Buckley and the signers asked that a moratorium be imposed on any further action of the Plan until January 2009, a time when farmers can be more readily available and involved. Mr. Buckley added that the Committee needs to get together with the farmers to discuss the issue. He feels the committee is against them. We cannot go to zero growth as the Plan suggests.

Robert McIntosh commented that the Committee is not an official board and therefore, they are not required by law to advertise meetings. He went on to say the Committee is not against farmers, however, the farmers need to acknowledge there is pressure to develop; farm land is precious.

Councilman Ziehm suggested the farmers get together and draw up a plan that they want.

Resident Rani Bass remarked that alternate plans were presented but the Committee wouldn't consider them.

Councilman Ted Berndt suggested removing the subdivision section from the Plan and address that particular part with the Planning Board through revising the subdivision rules and regulations. He also stated that we recognize that farmers are good stewards of the land, however, we need a plan for the future.

Supervisor Trinkle remarked that Chris DeBolt, from the County Planning Department, will be working with the Comprehensive Plan Committee. She reassured the farmers that the Town Board will not adopt the Plan with the subdivisions regulations that are currently proposed. No action was taken regarding the moratorium.

County Report

Supervisor Trinkle stated that she has learned the state is going to impose a 1.5% surcharge on any items bid under state contract.

New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness has released its recommendations with a strong focus on eliminating certain local offices and centralizing them to a county or regional level. A summarized copy of the recommendations was distributed to the Board.

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Supervisor Trinkle said the County has procured a grant to study the feasibility of consolidating all the local town assessing units to one unit at the county level.

Councilman Ted Berndt stated a constituent asked him to ask Supervisor Trinkle that the County consider offering benefits to same sex partners of county employees.

The following bills were presented fro audit and approved for payment:

General #82 – 94 \$9,839.45

Highway #52 – 60 \$19,818.05

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Beelen Eddy
Town Clerk