

Town Board Minutes
February 9, 2009

At a Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 9th day of February 2009, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

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

Others present: Deputy Town Clerk Jeanne Korb, Highway Supt. Eric Shaw, Bookkeeper Margaret Shaw, Code Enforcement Officer LaVerne Davis, Town Justice Tom Armet, Lou Imhof, Meaghan Wilkins, Gretchen Wilmot, Dick & Nancy Mabeus, William Watkins, Terry Hamilton, Bob Hamilton, Maureen Bersaw, Dick Battistoni, Henry Peabody, Jim Buckley, Gerald Skiff, Carl Brennan, Rani & Alex Bass, Cassie Fedler, John Gebo, Dan Schmitt

Supervisor Trinkle called the meeting to order and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. She announced that, in order to keep the meeting moving, all comments or questions from the public will be heard in the Privilege of the Floor only.

Supervisor Trinkle stated she would like to address three issues that have been reoccurring at Town Board meetings the past few months.

First, the Brownell Road Property. Attorney Alan Wrigley was present at January 2009 meeting to explain the procedure the Board went through for the Brownell Road Property. That property has never been listed on the tax roll as a town property. Two years ago it was listed as a private individual's property and last year that person wanted to sell it. Attorney Wrigley came to the Board asking us to sign a Quit Claim Deed, which we did, to clear the property so it had a clear title. We have discussed this for 3 -4 meetings and I think we have pretty much "beat the dead horse on it". Therefore, there will not be any more discussion on it.

Second, the Vly Summit Property has been brought up. There was some question because the Board threw out the top bid. It is the privilege of the Board to throw out any or all bids. This bid was not a legitimate bid because you cannot bid \$100 over the top bidder. Why bother having a bidding process? It's a sure win. The board did the right thing.

Third, the issue of the excavator that the town bough in January 2008 was brought up. We rented that machine for 2 years and the person that owned it wanted to sell it. It was a machine in good condition and the town saved money by renting it and not hiring a contractor. The only way we can by any type of equipment is by going out for bid. We advertised the bid and that's the way it was sold. Another issue with that was the fact that the owner of the machine who sold it to the town was my son-in-law. Most all the Board, I believe, knew that for the 3-4 months we discussed it. Mrs. Trinkle stated she does not support her son-in-law and her son-in-law does not support her. We live in a small town and she has a large family. It was a Town Board decision to buy the machine and that's where it's going to stay.

She stated she understands that not everyone is always in agreement with what the Board does and she respects that. However, the Board tries to do what they think is the right thing. We are good honest people and we give much thought to what we do. She asked the board if anyone wanted to add anything?

Councilman Nichols responded that, in regards to the excavator, the Board looked at it and realized the town would save money by owning it for five years rather than renting it annually. The only reason he voted for it was to save the town money.

Minutes

Councilman Ted Berndt motioned, seconded by Councilman Joel Nichols, to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the December 31, 2008 Year-End Meeting, the January 12, 2009 Organizational and Regular Meeting and the January 17, 2009 Special Meeting and approve them as mailed by the Town Clerk with one correction. Correction being that Councilman Berndt was not present at the December 31, 2008 meeting as recorded.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Items to be Added to Agenda

Under New Business – Speed limit on Perry Lane

Supervisor's Report

1. The monthly financial reports were reviewed and commented upon. Supervisor Trinkle said that all the tax money is in. A list of the invested monies was provided. In addition, a quarterly budget report ending 12/31/08 was provided by Bookkeeper Margaret Shaw.

Councilman Nichols motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Imhof, to accept the January 2009 General and Highway financial reports as well as the quarterly budget report.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

2. On January 17, 2009, the Town Board held a Special Meeting to interview the two candidates who applied for the Sole Assessor position. Mary Ellen Hill-Pierce was appointed to fill out Jeff Jackson's unexpired term which ends in 2013. Ms. Hill-Pierce is currently the Sole Assessor for the Towns of Ft. Ann, Whitehall and Corinth. She has been a certified assessor for 19 years. When she was first starting out she worked in the Town of Cambridge in 1988 when the town was undergoing a reval. Her hours are Thursday evening 5 – 9 and two Saturdays mornings a month yet to be determined. Her appointment was contingent upon the approval of NYS Office of Real Property Services. Notice has been received from them that her appointment has been approved. A simple contract between Ms. Hill-Pierce and the Town is being drawn up by the Town Attorney which will document her duties. Ms. Hill-Pierce is expected to be at the March 9 Town Board meeting.
3. On February 6, Supervisor Trinkle and Supt. Shaw attended a meeting with SEMO and FEMA at the County concerning the December 11, 2008 ice storm. Applications were filled out to receive monetary reimbursement. Supt. Shaw commented he has another meeting with them on Feb. 13.
4. Received a request from Assemblyman Tony Jordan for a list of projects for which the town may require his assistance. Supervisor Trinkle responded with four major concerns: 1) Restore Chips funding. It's projected to be cut 42.65% in 2009 which translates into less than one mile of road paving 2) Restore General Purpose State Aid which helps to operate our General Fund; 3) Consider consolidation of government. Not all ideas of consolidations are good for the towns. Taking away local controls is taking away the local voice. Each issue needs to be addressed

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individually as to how it impacts the town. 4) Grants, specifically bridge grants. The Towns of Cambridge and White Creek are responsible for the South Union Street Bridge which is in need of repair at the estimated cost of \$70,000.

Town Board Report

Councilman Berndt stated there has been no new update from Verizon regarding high speed internet service.

No Town Clerk Report

Supervisor Trinkle introduced Deputy Town Clerk Jeanne Korb who is filling in Sally Eddy who is on vacation.

No Planning Board Report

Highway Superintendent's Report

1. We spent the month dealing with a number of ice and snow storms. If we weren't cleaning or greasing, we were plowing and sanding.
2. We started changing oil in the trucks and equipment again.
3. Found out that the Governor's budget calls for a 42.65% cut in CHIPS funding. Last year we received \$117,322. This year we should expect only \$67,284.
4. We've been cleaning snow from culverts and areas we usually have water problems with when the snow melts.
5. Repairs were made as needed in shop. The biggest being a gear box for the '98 sander.
6. PESH conducted an inspection and we were cited with only a few minor violations. We have 60 to 90 days to come into compliance.

Code Enforcement

Laverne Davis submitted an annual report of the activities of the building department for 2008. There were 4 new homes, 5 septic systems, 9 storage buildings, 7 additions & alternations, 7 Certificates of Occupancy, 1 deck, 1 demolition, 1 woodstove chimney, 1 solar panels, 2 outdoor furnaces, and inspected 4 chimney fires. Mr. Davis traveled a total of 980 miles. As compared to last year, new homes and septic systems are down; additions and storage buildings are up.

No Assessor's Report

Communications

1. Received a note from Peg Hopkins, secretary of the Cambridge Valley Senior Citizens, thanking the Board for their contribution of \$750. It will help pay for heating costs.
2. Received a letter from Jeff Jackson thanking the Board and town residents for their trust and support they showed him while he was Assessor for the town. He stated it was a pleasure working for the Town of Cambridge and he has many fond memories to take with him. He wishes the town the best.

Unfinished Business

Town Webpage – Supervisor Trinkle talked with Village Trustee Chris Callahan about the Town having a space on the Village’s website. He strongly suggested the town develop its own. Mrs. Trinkle visited the Village’s site and found the listings quite informative.

Councilman Ted Berndt stated he has looked into it and the fees for buying a domain name and web posting are under \$150.00. Fees would be higher if we had a URL address of .gov. as opposed to domain name.org. Councilman Berndt volunteered to get the web page up and running. He said it should take about two weeks.

As to the information to post on the web site, it was suggested to post agendas, minutes of meetings, elected and appointed officials, contact information for Town Board, Assessor, High Superintendent, Town Justice including e-mail addresses and other important things as they develop

Motion by Councilman Nichols

Seconded by Councilwoman Imhof

Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge does hereby authorize Councilman Ted Berndt to move forward with the establishing of a Town of Cambridge web site.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

New Business

Town Justice Annual Report

Supervisor Trinkle read aloud the 2008 annual report submitted by Town Justice Tom Armet. The report stated there were 73 vehicle and traffic summonses of which 43 plead guilty and paid fines & surcharges while 43 were dismissed; 19 Penal Law cases one of which is pending; 1 ECON summons with a guilty plea; 3 civil matters resolved; 5 scofflaw matters resolved. A total of 96 matters were heard and/or handled.

Monies collected and sent to NYS Comptroller were :

\$3240.00	finer
1525.00	surcharges
175.00	scofflaw
<u>56.68</u>	<u>civil fees</u>
\$5176.68	total

Annual Audit of Books for Clerk to Supervisor

The books of the Clerk to the Supervisor, Margaret Shaw, were submitted for annual audit. The Board reviewed them and signed off.

Procurement Policy

The Board reviewed the Town’s Procurement Policy and made no changes. Supervisor Trinkle pointed out that #VII was added a few years ago and has served the town well. It states that in the best interest of the area economy, all purchasers are encouraged, as reasonably practicable, to purchase goods and services from local businesses.

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Motion by Councilwoman Imhof
Seconded by Councilman Ziehm

Resolved, that the Town of Cambridge Town Board has reviewed the Town's Procurement Policy and initiated no changes finding the policy to be sufficient and satisfactory.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Speed Limit Sign Request

Carl Brennan, a resident of Perry Lane, spoke to the Board about the traffic conditions on the Lane and requested a speed limit sign. When he moved there in 1996 there was only one small machine shop on the road. The business has grown to 6 – 7 buildings resulting in continuous traffic all day long with speeding tractor trailers, UPS trucks and about 100 employees making for a dangerous conditions on the .2 mile stretch of road. He has talked with owner Don Schneider who in turn has warned drivers but it has not helped the situation. He has put up his own speed limit signs at the end of his driveway but they get knocked down by the plow. He has called the police about the speeding traffic but nothing has been resolved.

Councilman Nichols wondered if the 45 mph sign in Coila contributes to the problem with drivers thinking that it includes Perry Lane.

Motion by Councilman Nichols
Seconded by Councilman Ziehm

Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge does hereby approve that application be made for a reduced speed limit of 30 mph for Perry Lane.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Mr. Brennan thanked the Board for their consideration of the matter.

County Report

1. Supervisor Trinkle stated that the county- wide unemployment rate for 2007 was 4.5% and for 2008 it was at 6.9%.
2. She stated that the Governor's budget is adversely effecting the County and hopes the President's stimulus package will be of help.
3. The County owns two vacant parcels of land they are considering selling. One is located in the Town of Argyle near the Pleasant Valley Infirmary consisting of 77 acres. The other is in the Town of Ft. Ann across from Route 149. Supervisor Trinkle asked for input on the sale of these properties from the public. She would like to keep the subject open for future discussion.
Gerald Skiff asked if the Ft. Ann property was being considered for a landfill site? Supervisor Trinkle responded "No".

Privilege of the Floor

William Watkins raised questions again about the Brownell Road Property. He also questioned why the town made repairs to a trailer in the town garage while it was under rental by the town?

Cassie Fedler asked Supervisor Trinkle as to why the townspeople could no longer comment during the board meeting, instead of having to wait until the privilege of the floor at the very end? Supervisor Trinkle responded that she is trying the new procedure to curb the meetings from becoming out of hand. Also, by state law there is to be no public input during the board meeting session.

Councilman Ted Berndt spoke of an upcoming County Public Works Committee meeting where they will be discussing ways to make the transfer stations more affordable. Supervisor Trinkle commented on the transfer stations saying that there are fewer recyclables coming in and currently the market for them is not strong, reducing revenues.

Bob Hamilton asked which transfer station was the busiest? Supervisor Trinkle replied Town of Jackson.

Nancy Mabeus expressed concern about keeping the county park at Lake Lauderdale open so that local business could profit. Supervisor Trinkle said the County has restored partial funding of \$14,500 to each of the two county parks. Also, there are local groups trying to raise money also to keep the parks open.

Councilman Joel Nichols asked if the state would be overriding the town's law on the issue of outdoor wood burning furnaces? Supervisor Trinkle stated that it is being considered but is not in effect yet.

John Gebo, a resident of Perry Lane, was inquiring about a dog issue, and that he hadn't received a response yet. He stated neighborhood dogs were killing his chickens. He was advised by the Board to call Animal Control Officer Ed Holland again.

The following bills were submitted for audit and approved for payment:

General #10 – 26	\$13,685.68
Highway # 7 – 23	\$ 8,408.36

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne K. Korb
Deputy Town Clerk

