

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

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

Others present: Town Clerk Sally Eddy, Highway Supt. Eric Shaw, Assessor Mary Ellen Hill-Pierce, Code Enforcement Officer LaVerne Davis, Ashleigh Farrell, Heather Greenawalt, Margaret Shaw, Cassie Fedler, William Watkins, Dick Battistoni, Maureen Bersaw, Nancy Mabeus, Janet & David DeCarlo, Steve Peluso, Nancy Strong, Lois Jasek, Rani Bass, Dan Schmitt, Henry Peabody, Raymon & Mary Scott and son, Gerald Skiff, Judy Leon, Dick Sutherland, Ben Yurschak, Dorothy Yurschak, Terry Hamilton, Alan Davis, Charlotte Banzhaf, Scott Keller, Bliss & Robert McIntosh, Lou Imhof, Terry Ziehm, Terry Hamilton, Dan Thomas, Charlie Pearson, Bob Hamilton, Jim Buckley, Jr, Jim Stannard, and Mr. Bartholomew

Supervisor Trinkle called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and immediately led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes

Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilman Berndt, to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2009 and the October 22, 2009 meetings as mailed by the Town Clerk with two corrections to the Oct. 22 meeting. On Page 2, paragraph 5, Councilman Nichols corrected the wording to say that he said the Cambridge Fire Department received a 20% increase two years ago not 5% as reported. (He added it actually should be 15.5%). The second correction was that Eric Shaw was not present at the meeting as recorded.

Vote: 5 – Aye 0 – Noes

Assessor's Presentation

The Town Board asked Assessor Mary Ellen Hill-Pierce to attend tonight's meeting to address the many questions and allegations the public had at last month's meeting concerning assessments and the office of the assessor. Steve Peluso, from the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services(ORPS) and Assessors Nancy Strong, from the Towns of Hampton and Hartford, and Lois Jasek, from the Town of Hebron, were also in attendance to assist Ms. Hill-Pierce. A tax payer from Whitehall, Mr. Bartholomew, spoke in support of Ms. Hill-Pierce.

Assessor Hill-Pierce first began by reading a statement addressing the article in the October 14, 2009 issue of *The Eagle Newspaper* covering the Town Board meeting of October 12, 2009. She stated she felt compelled to respond to its "many inaccuracies and slanderous quotes". Ms. Hill-Pierce reprimanded the reporter for not interviewing her in order to get the facts and not "simply repeat uninformed opinions.

Supervisor Trinkle, then, opened up the floor to the public. Mr. Peluso and Ms. Hill-Pierce fielded questions, comments, criticisms and remarks for about 90 minutes. The two officials endeavored to answered questions and explain the process involved in establishing assessments and equalization rates. The Town Board thanked Ms. Hill-Pierce, Mr. Peluso, Assessors Strong and Jasek and Mr. Bartholomew for attending tonight's meeting.

Items to be Added

Under New Business – c. Audit Request

Supervisor's Report

1. The monthly financial reports were reviewed and commented upon.
Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilman Nichols, to accept the October 2009 General and Highway Financial Reports as prepared by Bookkeeper Margaret Shaw.
Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes
2. Received a request from the local Boy Scout Troop for permission to perform work at Turnpike Cemetery in order for a member(s) to earn an Eagle Scout Badge. The Troop will be invited to attend the December 2009 Town Board meeting to elaborate further about the work they wish to do.
3. Received a quote for soft ware for the bookkeeping department from Enhanced Business Systems, Albany, NY in the amount of \$7,369.60 with an annual maintenance fee of \$750.00. The matter was tabled.

No Town Board Report

Planning Board Report

Secretary Sally Eddy stated the Planning Board met Nov. 5 and addressed the following:

1. Held a public hearing and granted Final Approval to the Tiashoke Properties Minor Subdivision of 1.05 acres submitted by Stuart Ziehm located at the intersection of Durfee and Schweninger Road.
2. The Planning Board passed a resolution urging the present Town Board not to fill the vacancy created by Walter Korb's resignation but to leave it as a matter to be addressed by the new Town Board after it has taken office on January 1, 2010. The resolution passed with 5 ayes votes and 1 no vote.

Highway Superintendent's Report

1. The fall grading was completed.
2. Ditching was done on various roads.
3. The plow equipment was readied for winter. All the trucks are equipped and ready to go.
4. All the trucks were inspected with the 1998 being the only one that needed several repairs. All needed repairs were made.
5. Some driveway culverts that needed replacement were replaced.

No Code Enforcement Report

Communications

Supervisor Trinkle received notice that Consolidated Agricultural District #3, consisting of 53,941 acres in the Towns of Cambridge, Easton, Jackson and White Creek is coming up for its eight year review. Any State Agency or any landowner within or adjacent to the District may propose a modification of the district by contacting the County Clerk until December 7, 2009.

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Unfinished Business

Supervisor Trinkle asked of any Planning Board member present why the vacancy on the Planning Board should be tabled until the new Town Board takes office? No one responded.

She then asked the Town Clerk who applied for the position? Clerk Sally Eddy stated that 4 people had contacted her. They were Judy Leon, Dorothy Yurschak, Ben Yurschak and Gerald Moppert.

The Town Board proceeded to interview each candidate separately and all were asked basically the same questions. In addition, each candidate gave their reasons as to why they were interested in serving on the Planning Board.

At 9:50 PM, Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilman Berndt, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the selection of one of candidates interviewed to fill the vacancy on Planning Board. Vote: 5- Ayes 0 - Noes

At 10:05 PM, Councilwoman Imhof motioned, seconded by Councilman Nichols, to end the Executive Session and enter back into the Regular Meeting.
Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Supervisor Trinkle called for a roll call vote for a nomination to fill the vacancy on the planning board.

Councilman Berndt – Dr. Gerald Moppert

Councilman Nichols – Dr. Gerald Moppert

Councilman Ziehm – Dr. Gerald Moppert

Councilwoman Imhof – Dr. Gerald Moppert

Supervisor Trinkle – Dr. Gerald Moppert

Supervisor Trinkle stated Dr. Moppert was selected because he has had a lot of experience in handling controversial issues as an emergency room doctor for many, many years and as president of the local school board. He brings a different career to the planning board than what's already on the board.

She stated that the other 3 candidates were very well qualified and encouraged each of them to apply again if an opening on the planning board occurs.

New Business

Fuel Bids

Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Imhof, to authorize Superintendent Shaw to advertise for bid the town's 2010 fuel supply.

Councilman Berndt asked the motion be amended by adding that the vendors be required to state how the diesel fuel is mixed. Councilman Ziehm restated the motion to include Mr. Berndt's request.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Councilman Nichols recommended a letter be sent to all the fuel companies that submitted a bid last year notifying them of the bid.

Budget Amendment

Supervisor Trinkle stated the town received \$37,000(Supt. Shaw confirmed the actual amount to be \$31,571.62) in FEMA money in 2009 which was put into the DA Equipment Account(DA 5130.2) The town needs to do something with it before the end of the year. There are three options: 1) can leave it as

is and it will go back into the General Fund, 2) place it in the Equipment Reserve Fund or 3) use it to replace one of the tractors.

Councilman Nichols remarked that when we purchased the original piece of equipment we took it out of the Reserve Fund and the money should go back into that fund. Just to buy the tractor because we have the money does not make perfect sense as long as it's working ok. The money will be there if you need it.

Supt. Shaw said the town has two tractors and he is looking to replace the one that's 14 years old. He would keep the newer of the two for a backup. He can purchase a New Holland under state contract for \$34,481.00. Two other dealers gave him quotes which came in \$2000 above the state contract price.

Supervisor Trinkle stated there is currently \$103,000 in the Reserve Equipment Fund and \$50,000 has been provided for in the 2010 budget.

After more discussion, the following resolution was enacted:

Resolution by Councilman Joel Nichols

Seconded by Councilman Ted Berndt

Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge does hereby go on record authorizing the transfer of the FEMA money in the amount of \$31,571.62 from DA5130.2 Highway Equipment Fund to the DA962 Highway Reserve Fund under Budgetary Provisions.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Audit of Town Books

Supervisor Trinkle commented that a few meetings ago a suggestion was made to have an audit of the town's books done by the State Comptroller's Office. Now, since a new administration will be taking over it is even more prudent. She has drafted a letter requesting such services.

Motion by Councilman Nichols

Seconded by Councilwoman Imhof,

Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge does hereby authorize Supervisor Trinkle to send a letter to the Office of the State Comptroller requesting an audit of the town's books.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 - Noes

County Report

Supervisor Trinkle stated the 2010 county budget has been presented and it shows a 3.99% increase in spending. Many items are mandated that cannot be changed. There has been a reduction in the number of employees, employee benefits and every employee will be required to take a two day furlough without pay. The two county parks will be funded as they were in 2009. However, Cornell Cooperative Extension went from \$385,000 down to \$100,000 which, according to Supervisor Trinkle, will just about close their doors. Soil and Water Conservation took a \$40,000 cut. She asked the Board and the audience to write letters if they want to see any funds restored, particularly supporting Cooperative Extension. We live in a farming community and Extension provides services beneficial to the agricultural industry. She is required to vote on the overall budget and would like to know how the people feel about it. Comments and questions were put forth by the audience.

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The county budget will be presented to the public on Thursday, Nov. 12 at the Greenwich VFW from 3:00 – 4:00 PM.

The public hearing will be held on Friday, Nov. 13, 10:00 AM at the county building.

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

General # 178 – 199 \$10,074.71

Highway #131 – 143 \$ 9,490.64

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 10:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally B. Eddy
Town Clerk