

At a regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 12th day of October 2009, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

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

Others present: Town Clerk Sally Eddy, Highway Supt. Eric Shaw, LaVerne Davis, Ashleigh Farrell, Heather Greenawalt, Alan Davis, Dick Sutherland, Henry Peabody, Janet DeCarlo, Amy Drake, Cassie Fedler, Rani Bass, William Watkins, Gerald Skiff, Abdon Buckley, Dan Schmidt, Francis Moon, Pat Hepp, Nancy Mabeus, Dan Thomas, Bruce Merrell, Bob Hamilton, Dan & Becky Molloy, Robert McIntosh, Mary & Raymon Scott, Jim Buckley, Jr.

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

Minutes

Councilman Berndt motioned, seconded by Councilman Ziehm, to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the September 14, 2009 meeting and approve them as mailed by the Town Clerk with one correction. Correction being on page 2, Item 3, under Supervisor's Report, the amount of increase in the proposed 2009 contract with the Village of Cambridge Fire Department is \$1385.62 not \$1436.66 as recorded.

Vote: 4 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Supervisor's Report

1. The monthly financial reports were reviewed and commented upon. In addition, Bookkeeper Margaret Shaw prepared a third quarter budget report showing income, budgeted amounts of all accounts with expenditures and balances of those accounts thru September 30, 2009.

Councilwoman Imhof motioned, seconded by Councilman Ziehm, to accept the September 2009 General and Highway budget reports as well as the third quarter budget report as presented.

Vote: 4 – Ayes 0 – Noes

2. Received a letter from Congressman Scott Murphy acknowledging the receipt of the resolution adopted at the September 14, 2009 meeting encouraging immediate relief for dairy farmers and supporting changes at the federal level establishing the price of fluid milk at the farm gate.

Town Board Report

Councilwoman Imhof expressed a concern that arose from observing the disposal of trash at the Jackson transfer station. She watched two people with bags of garbage and one person with a garbage can dump their garbage with no stickers attached or given to an attendant. She was disturbed about the loss of revenue. She suggested having someone at the station to monitor the disposal process making sure people have the proper amount stickers in accordance with the amount of garbage they want to get rid of.

Councilman Ted Berndt stated that the high speed internet committee will be meeting with Hudson Valley Wireless on October 19 to begin broadband mapping of the town. The purpose is to find out where the served and underserved areas are in the town regarding internet service.

Town Clerk Report

Clerk Sally Eddy reported she received confirmation from the NYS Secretary of State's Office that Local Law #3 of the Year 2009 was filed as of September 25, 2009. It's a law providing for Cold War Veterans Exemption.

In addition, she related that planning board member Walter Korb submitted his resignation from the planning board effective September 30, 2009.

Planning Board Report

Secretary Sally Eddy stated the Board met Oct. 1 and addressed the following matters:

1. Was apprised of the resignation of Walter Korb
2. Was informed by Chairman Eric Pearson about an upcoming planning and zoning briefing on October 22 in Albany with Saratoga Associates sponsoring the event.
3. Will hold a public hearing at the November meeting on the Tiashoke Subdivision located at the corner of Durfee and Schweningen Roads. The subdivision consists of 1.05 acres and contains a farm house with two barns. The application was submitted by Stuart Ziehm. Mr. Ziehm is one-third owner of Tiashoke Properties and he and his wife desire to own the house and barns.

Highway Superintendent

1. Mowing of roadsides was completed.
2. Trees and brush along various roadways were cut.
3. The fall grading of our roads has started.
4. At present, we are in the process of getting the equipment ready for the winter months.
5. The '94 International truck was sandblasted and holes were patched before being painted.
6. 626 yards of gravel were screened and drawn back to the shop for our stockpile.

No Code Enforcement Report

No Communications

No Unfinished Business

New Business

Planning Board Vacancy

After discussing Walter Korb's resignation from the Planning Board the following resolution was enacted:

Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilman Berndt, to advertise the Planning Board vacancy in the town's official newspaper, The Eagle, and to interview the candidate(s) at the November 9, 2009 Town Board meeting.

Vote: 4 – Ayes 0 – Noes

BAR Member

Supervisor Trinkle received notification from Washington County Real Property Tax Services that William Walsh's term on the Board of Assessment Review expired as of September 30, 2009. According to Super. Trinkle, Mr Walsh does not want to be reappointed. She remarked that if anyone knows of someone who would like to serve to let her know.

Tentative Budget

Supervisor Trinkle went through the budget line item by line item as board members entered the figures on their copies. There was a 2% increase for highway workers, a \$5000 increase in the Assessor's budget

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for the annual reassessment that's being done, \$1385.62 increase in the fire protection contract with the Village of Cambridge as well as increase in health insurance for employees.

Councilwoman Imhof asked if the town should continue supporting the Cambridge Valley Rescue Squad since she has heard the organization is doing O.K. Is the town's income needed? If it is needed, then she favors continued support.

Councilman Ted Berndt, who sits on the Rescue Squad Board, stated he will talk with members of the organization about the matter.

Supervisor Trinkle stated she was concerned about the \$1385.62 raise the Cambridge Fire Company is requesting. She questioned if it's the right time to establish a machinery maintenance fund given the economic climate. She will be contacting Mayor Spiezio to further discuss the matter. The Towns of Jackson and White Creek have also been asked for funding. White Creek is questioning it also. Councilman Ziehm asked if we (Town Board) had to make a decision tonight? Supervisor Trinkle stated we can hold a budget workshop and decide then.

The tentative budget showed the amount to be raised by tax is up \$10,548 more than last year which is a 1.8% increase. It translates to about 4 cents more per thousand dollars of assessed valuation for taxpayers.

The Board agreed to hold a budget workshop on October 22, 7:30 PM followed by a public hearing on the 2010 Preliminary Budget.

County Report

1. On October 29, the Board of Supervisors will present the 2010 Tentative Budget. The public hearing on the 2010 Preliminary Budget is scheduled for November 13, 2009 at 10:00 AM. The county is working at holding the budget under a 4% increase and is still looking at places to cut.
2. The County has approved to distribute \$1 million of its sales tax revenue for the next two years among the towns and villages in the county.
3. The transfer stations will continue, for now, to follow their current schedule of 3 days of operation.
4. Christine Hoffer, a Village of Cambridge resident, has been appointed as Director of Tourism for Washington County. It's a part time position.

Privilege of the Floor

Resident Dan Schmidt asked Supervisor Trinkle if she had contacted Jim O'Keefe at the Office of Real Property Tax Services (ORPS)? She replied she did and that she e-mailed Mr. Schmidt's request to him. Super. Trinkle said she has not received any response back from him only that he would be working with the local assessor.

Cassie Fedler asked Super. Trinkle if the mortgage tax income was as dismal as she thought it was going to be? Super. Trinke responded that some towns had a big drop. Cambridge has received about the same as we did last year. The revenue from that item all depends upon if people take out a mortgage when they buy a home in our town. Super. Trinkle said she actually increased the mortgage tax income by \$3000 in the 2010 budget based on last year's figures.

Nancy Mabeus directed comments to Superintendent Shaw and Supervisor Trinkle regarding a drainage ditch issue that's been ongoing. Over 3 years ago, she said she contacted Supt. Shaw about her neighbor who placed a tarp and debris in a back drainage ditch which has not only resulted in obstruction but has also attracted varmints. She asked Supt. Shaw, "Did it take that long to act because the neighbor was friendly and did business with the Trinkles?" She said work began in 2008 but stopped. She asked Supt. Shaw if the work stopped because she was an opponent of the Comprehensive Plan? She said he was annoyed and even angry with her and he said he would notify her when he gets to it. She has not been contacted to date. Her latest call to him was Oct. 9, 2009. Mrs. Mabeus accused Mr. Shaw of being biased and showing favoritism. She also accused the Town Board of being more interested in pushing big government and taxes upon the people rather than meeting the basic need of the town's people.

Supt. Shaw was ready to offer a response, but Mrs. Mabeus did not want to hear it. However, a resident spoke up and said he wanted to hear what Supt. Shaw had to say. Supt. Shaw stated he looked at the ditch and the tarp was not obstructing it. He confirmed he said he would check into putting stone in the ditch if the telephone company would come and mark it. The phone company did mark it but he discovered there were power lines buried in the ditch, too. In order to put enough stone in the ditch to do any good he would have to dig down. He said he has had enough problems with the phone company that he wasn't going to dig up their cable to put stone in the ditch in order to settle a dispute between neighbors.

For the next several minutes many residents, including Francis Moon, Gerald Skiff, William Watkins, Dan Thomas, Abdon Buckley, Janet DeCarlo, Nancy Mabeus, Mary Scott and Raymon Scott, voiced strong concerns about their assessments and whole the assessment process. Among their concerns was the fear that their assessments will be going up 9% in 2010 because the current equalization rate is at 91% and the Assessor is engaged in doing an annual reassessment to get the town back to 100%. The residents criticized Assessor Mary Ellen Hill-Pierce accusing her of not doing her job right, complained she's out of control, that she's doing things that are illegal and they wondered what's the basis for her information. The Board listened, answered when they could and, at the end, Supervisor Trinkle stated she will ask the Assessor to attend the November 9, 2009 Town Board meeting to answer questions.

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

General #162 – 177 \$10,747.28

Highway #115 – 130 \$26,079.13

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally B. Eddy
Town Clerk