

Regular Town Board Meeting
April 9, 2012

At the Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 9th of April, 7:00 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

Supervisor William Watkins
Councilwoman Catherine Fedler
Councilman Robin McMurray
Councilman Gerald Skiff
Councilman Douglas Ford

Others Present: Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt, Jim Buckley Jr., Robbie McIntosh, Deputy Town Clerk Melissa Stannard, Charlie Pearson, Terry Hamilton, Elton Balch, Bill Bauchann, Lillian Herrington, Rani Bass, Marie Drost, Ralph Greenawalt, Henry Peabody, Town Justice Janet DeCarlo, David DeCarlo, Liam McMurray, Holly McMurray, Astrid Davis, Alan Davis Highway Superintendent, Don Jepson, Bob Hamilton, Bill McCarty Washington Office of Real Property, Ashleigh Morris from the Eagle, LaVerne Davis Code Enforcement, Nancy Maebus, Bruce Rolleston, Scott Keller Town Attorney, Sergeant McWhorter from the Sheriff's Office, others present

Audit of the Bills

Bills were audited prior to the meeting at 7:00 PM.

General	#89 – 112	\$7,188.82
Highway	#29 – 38	\$3,749.33

Supervisor Watkins called the meeting to order immediately after the bills and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approving of the Minutes

Resolution #37

Councilman McMurray motioned, Seconded by Councilman Skiff to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2012 meeting as mailed.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Supervisor's Report

Resolution #38

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman Skiff to approve the March 2012 Supervisor's report.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Transfer of Funds

Resolution#39

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman Skiff to transfer \$100.00 from contingent A1990.4 to Town Board, Contractual A1010.4 to cover the billing for the website.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Internet in the Town of Cambridge

The Supervisor reported on the new High Speed Internet from Hudson Valley Wireless for the Town of Cambridge. Supervisor Watkins reported that the Town of Cambridge

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has no contract with Hudson Valley Wireless and that no money has exchanged hands. There is an agreement with Betty Little's Office and Washington County LDC that has to do with the \$100,000 grant that was secured. The grant was split between a number of towns with the Town of Cambridge receiving \$20,000. Resident Elton Balch who helped the Supervisor bring the wireless internet to the Town of Cambridge reported on the internet service. He explained that he got involved with the Supervisor because like everyone else in the town he is struggling with the high speed internet. Elton and Supervisor Watkins attended some meetings with the Washington County LDC, and spoke to a number of vendors. Hudson Valley Wireless was one of these and they submitted a proposal. Washington County LDC negotiated a contract with them and in turn let them have the \$20,000 to build the small tower. This tower was installed on resident Danny Thomas's property. This tower will supply internet service to the town hall and possibly other residents of the town. They are also looking for other areas in the town to build towers. Hudson Valley's proposal included free service to the town hall for five years. A computer will be installed in the back room in the town hall for the residents of the town to try this service. It was also mentioned that the supervisor should be commended for his work that was done on this project. Mr. Balch also commented on how this improvement for the Town Clerk and the Judge has made their jobs a lot easier and freed them up to do other work. The Verizon DSL is a thing of the past, more companies are moving toward wireless options. There will be some other projects coming down the pipe for example the whiteface project and other vendors who are working on more wireless solutions.

Many Residents of the town had questions such as how the town managed to get free service. Mr. Balch stated that this was part of the grant proposal for us allowing them in the town.

Robberies in the Town of Cambridge

Supervisor Watkins invited Sgt. McWhorter from the sheriff's office to stop by the meeting. He reported on the robberies in the area and the best prevention tips to follow. The following were suggested: lock all of your doors and windows, field/game cameras could be used, motion/censor lights, change outside of the residence to throw off the robbers, change the time and routine, use timers on lights. He reported that many of these robberies are taking place during the day. The Supervisor also mentioned that 3 different residents have come to him and mentioned that they are intimidated, fearing their safety when coming to Town Board meetings. The Supervisor said that Sgt. McWhorter and other officers would be stopping by the meetings and the Town Clerks office periodically to check things out. The Supervisor also mentioned that there is a new program that they are trying to implement where the sheriffs are partnering with the towns to work together to protect the town, this is called the liaison program. Through this program problems that are occurring in the town will be addressed. This is a new program that they are trying there at no cost to the town. They are trying to have more interaction with the residents and the officers. Councilman Skiff asked the deputy what the robbers were looking for. The sheriff responded that they were after quick things such as quick cash and jewelry. He did suggest that it was a good idea to write down the make/model/serial number of things such as tools, electronics and many other things so that they could be traced.

Internet

Supervisor Watkins recognized the work of the previous High Speed Internet Committee in doing a lot of the leg work in getting the internet to Cambridge. Councilman McMurray asked Town Justice Janet DeCarlo if she was happy with this new internet system. Town Justice Janet DeCarlo reported that one of her biggest problems before was issuing an order of protection. She reported that this document needs to go directly to Albany and sometimes in the past it has taken up to 45 minutes. She mentioned that the other night they did an order of protection with this new system and it took 5 minutes. Councilman McMurray asked the Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt if she was happy with this new system. The Town Clerk reported that she is very happy with the Hudson Valley Wireless internet. This made the last day for doing the taxes and reconciling with the county very easy. The DEC hunting licenses also work much better now with the new lap top and the new DEC printer and now with the new high speed internet system it is hopeful this hunting license season will run smoothly. A resident from the Town asked why this had not been discussed before at the previous board meetings. Councilman McMurray mentioned that the board chose to install the service and see how it worked before discussing the matter in public and deciding whether to move forward with it and offer it to the public. Mr. Balch said that the town could decide that they did not like the service. There would be other alternatives possibly in April and May with the 4G tower from Verizon that would be going up in Argyle. Councilman McMurray stated that they were test driving the internet before they made a decision. Councilman Skiff agreed it must be proven first before a decision could be made.

Resolution #40

Councilman Skiff motioned, Seconded by Councilman McMurray to have Hudson Valley Wireless as the new Internet provider for the Town Hall.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Councilwoman Fedler thanked the old Internet Committee, the Supervisor and Cliff DeCarlo, who helped do a lot of work with the air card and getting everything hooked up, also Elton Balch, and anyone else that may have been forgotten.

Assessor Report

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported in Jeffrey Jackson absence. Mr. Jackson said that after meeting with staff from the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Service and researching legal options regarding the recent County Supreme Court decision involving the former hospital property, it's his opinion the town would benefit from doing a town wide update for the 2013 tentative assessment roll, filed on May 1, 2013. The availability of good in-house data coupled with recent arms length sales, he feels, would provide an excellent data base for doing an update at this level without the need of hiring an outside contractor. Perhaps a modest sum should be set aside for any complex appraisals that would benefit the town, but that could be decided on a case by case basis. Mr. Jackson will be available to answer any questions regarding this issue.

Supervisor Watkins mentioned that he had spoke with assessor Jeffrey Jackson and this year they would be running an equalization rate of 104%. Starting May of this year the

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Assessor will be doing the Reval to have done by May of next year. Councilman Skiff said that this would not be a Reval that they should be calling it “an update of the records.” The Town Board has to make a decision whether they are going to do this inventory evaluation. Councilman Skiff mentioned that they did not know whether or not the State would be paying per parcel. There was question whether or not the Town of Cambridge was going to be doing a reval every year. Bill McCarty from the county commented and said that once the end of the project was near this could be decided but at this point and time it did not have to be decided. Councilwoman Fedler said that she had spoke with the Assessor and it depends a lot on the market volatility, if the market is up and moving around a lot you want to do a Reval. If the market is flat and nothing is moving then it is kind of wasted dollars spent. The Town Board is trying to keep everything current.

Resolution #41

Councilwoman Fedler motioned,
Seconded by Councilman Ford,

Be It Resolved, that Jeffry Jackson the assessor for the Town of Cambridge move forward with the reassessment program and to have the information ready for the May of 2013 assessment roll.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported that as of April 3rd the taxes have gone back to the county. Starting on May 1, 2012 to September 2, 2012 the transfer stations will be open 4 days a week Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. She also reminded everyone that the Town Clerk’s office would be closed April 23rd and 24th because she would be attending the Town Clerk’s Seminar. A notice will be in the paper for the next two weeks.

Town Board

Councilwoman Fedler summarized a letter that was written by a resident, Don Letizia. His complaint was in regards to the large truck traffic accessing Belle Road from County Rt. 59. He had concerns also in regards to the things that are going into the recycling operation of Wilmot’s and that there is nothing coming out. They also had some complaints about the use of the jake brakes, listed several trucking companies that they see go by their house. They feel that the level has greatly increased because there is a lot of noise pollution. They have no problem with the smells of farming but they are not happy with the smells of Agri-cycle. They are requesting the Town Board pass laws of zoning to benefit existing land use and residents. It was also mentioned that Mann Trucking from Greenwich is not included in the complaint. They are the only trucks that drive 100% safely and with courtesy in mind. Supervisor Watkins said that he would talk to Bob Wilmot and discuss the trucks. Councilman Skiff said that if the trucks are running outside the permitted hours then Bob will have to be contacted. Councilman Ford mentioned said yes, if they are running outside the permitted hours but we do need business in this town and we need trucks.

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt read Mark Roger’s letter of resignation effective immediately from his Planning Board position.

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Councilman Fedler asked the other board members how long the position should be posted. It was decided the vacant position of Planning Board be posted 30 days and interviews will take place at the May board meeting. Letters of interest should be submitted to the Town Clerks office by 4:00 p.m. on May 14, 2012.

Resolution # 42

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded Councilman McMurray to advertise 30 days for the vacant Planning Board position which will end December 31, 2015. Anyone interested must submit a letter of interest to the Town Clerk's office by 4:00 PM on May 14th. The interviews will take place at the May 14th Town Board Meeting.

Vote: Aye – 5 Noes – 0

Resolution #43

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded Councilman McMurray to accept Mark Rogers's resignation from the Planning Board effective immediately. Councilwoman Fedler commented on how much Mr. Rogers help was appreciated and that they regretfully accept this resignation.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Councilman Skiff reported that resident Norm Scribner informed him that the food pantry is located in the church next to the Post Office in Cambridge. This would be the Embury United Methodist Church.

Councilman McMurray reported that he had nothing to report this month. Councilman Skiff questioned what the status was on the barn wall on County Rt 59. The Supervisor stated that it was three quarters of the way pushed down. The Town Justice stated that they have taken a small portion of it down. The Town Justice said that the wires that are on the other portion must be taken down and there is an order to have this done. However, it will probably take a while before the barn is completely down.

Councilman Skiff said that Councilman McMurray and he had visited the dump or the old sanitary landfill. They feel that in the lower part of the dump you could hide and dump anything. Councilman Skiff asked if Highway Superintendent Alan Davis could put cable up. He said that he would put this cable up.

Councilman Skiff mentioned that there was confusion on when Clean up day would be. The Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported that clean up day would be the weekend of April 21st and 22nd, this is the weekend of Earth Day. Bags can be picked up at the Town Clerks office and the garbage that is collected can be dropped off at the highway garage.

Councilman Ford mentioned the rash of Foil Requests that have been received. He stated that he had a copy of guidelines for foiling. The councilman read a paragraph of it. An Agency may ask that you make your request in writing, and the person is required to

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reasonably describe the record that you are requesting. If possible the person requesting should supply dates and titles, file designations and if possible any other information to help the agency find the records. 5 days is the amount of time that is given to respond to the request. The agency must make the record available or deny access in writing explaining the reason for denial, or furnish a written acknowledgement of receipt of the request and a statement of when this information will be available. The time frame can not exceed 20 business days from the date of the acknowledgement of the receipt of the request. Councilman Ford mentioned that everyone needs to keep in mind that the Town Clerk is busy in the office and she can not just drop what she is doing to grab what ever foil request has been made.

The Supervisor asked the Board how this foil request procedure should be handled. The Town Clerk was asked how she would like to do this. The Town Clerk said that sometimes it is easier if it is a hard copy, because if the information is not in her computer it can not be emailed. The Town Supervisor said that it would be best to do a hard copy and each copy would be 25 cents a copy. The Town Justice said not to submit a foil request for the Judicial records because these records are not foible. The requests for foils must be in writing. The foil requests will be dropped off and the clerk is given the 5 days to respond to this request and 20 days to respond after the acknowledgement.

Councilwoman Fedler mentioned the new computer in the Town Hall for anyone to use to access the internet. Because of this she felt that the Town Board should look at the Computer usage policy that they adopted from the county. Councilwoman Fedler also mentioned that maybe the Town Board should take 15 to 20 minutes every month and discuss laws and ordinances that the residents would like to see in place. She mentioned that this was apparent tonight that residents are requesting something to be put in place. Councilwoman Fedler said that she would get the old comprehensive plan from Bill Fedory and so it could be referred to. She did mention that they were not going to do anything radical, this would only be discussion

Councilman Ford mentioned that he received an aggressive phone call from a resident on Saturday evening. He said that he has no problems with anyone stopping by or calling. However, he requested that he not receive any phone calls from Friday night sundown until sundown Saturday evening. His family are Seventh Day Adventists.

Highway Superintendent

The Highway Department has gotten a jump on spring work, they have been ditching on Conley, Dickensen and Whiteside Roads. The Grading and sweeping has been completed the 1st time. Brush and Trees have been cut on the Old Conley Road. The Highway crew has hauled gravel to Dr. Brown Lane and graded. The plows and wings have been scraped and painted. The new speed limit signs have been posted on Duell Hollow and South Rd. The 10 hour days have started this week and the Highway men will be working Monday thru Thursday. Highway Superintendent Alan Davis said the culverts that have settled over on Stump Church Road haven't been filled yet, he is waiting so that they can hot patch them. He handed out to the Town Board a copy of the Nationalgrid audit. The old lighting in the Highway garage will be obsolete in July so he

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gave the board a run of this audit. He is going to talk to a couple of towns and see if this is the way to go. There is a grant from Nationalgrid that gives them \$1,500 for doing these changes which will be more efficient. However, he is thinking that if there is a cheaper way of doing this he would like to investigate some more. The paperwork that was handed to the board was only the electricity audit; he still has someone that needs to get back to him on the energy portion of the audit. The other thing that was discussed was the black topping Alan Davis stated that he was looking at Turnpike Road and using the remaining of the Chips money to do a section of Gannon Road. He discussed this with the black topping person and they had said that yes, Turnpike could definitely stand to be blacktopped. Also submitted was a truck proposal which was gone over and it was decided to go out for bid for a new pickup truck.

Resolution #44

Supervisor Watkins motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to go out for bid on a new pickup truck.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes -0

The Black topping was discussed some more and Councilman Ford mentioned that it should be the roads that the community thinks need the black top. This was discussed at the Organizational Meeting in January that the residents of the town would be able to voice their opinions on which roads should be black topped.

Resolution #45

Councilman Ford motioned, Seconded by Councilman McMurray to Table the decision on the Black Topping of the roads in the Town of Cambridge till next meeting.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

The Highway Superintendent is requesting to attend the Highway Superintendent Conference in Ithaca, NY on June 10 – 13, 2012.

Resolution #46

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman McMurray to give Alan Davis the Highway Superintendent permission to attend the Highway Superintendents Conference in Ithaca, NY on June 10 – 13, 2012.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Planning Board

The Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting Thursday, April 5, 2012, 7:30PM, with 4 members present and 3 people from the public. The following business was addressed:

1. Held a public hearing and granted Final Approval to the Cleo Ford, Martha Ford and Ron Ford minor subdivision located on Edie and Stevenson Roads.

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2. Received the resignation of Mark Rogers from the Planning Board, effective immediately.
3. Received a letter from Washington County LDC about 4 upcoming educational seminars each a different topic. Two will be held in April and two in May. Members expressed interest in attending the May meetings. The subjects covered will be Agri-Planning and USDA programs.

Code Enforcement

LaVerne Davis reported that this year so far he only had 2 building permits. Supervisor Watkins asked if he had signed up for any schooling yet. He responded that schooling would not be until June.

Bill McCarty was present from the county to explain how the code enforcement would work for the Town of Cambridge if the county were to take it over. He handed out packets of fee schedules, applications and a fact sheet explaining currently how the county works the code enforcement department. He explained that this is now part of the county budget and it would be no additional charge to the town. He also explained that there could be a person at the town level that would sign off on things such as local issues. This person would be called the compliance officer and they would not have to have the schooling like LaVerne Davis. A concerned citizen stated that LaVerne Davis the current code enforcement officer, has been doing this for years and he knows the Town. The Board explained that LaVerne is no longer in compliance to do his job, there is schooling that he must take and he has one year to complete this. Judy Schneible was present from the Town of Easton and she stated that the amount that is paid to LaVerne Davis by the tax payer comes out to 12 cents a year per resident to keep the Code Enforcement at the local level. Councilwoman Fedler voiced her opinion and said that LaVerne has plenty of time to get caught up with his schooling and they prefer to have the community based Code Enforcement program. A concerned resident stated that the applications that must be filled out at the county looked involved. They also asked the amount of time it would take to get the permits if the county was to take over. Bill McCarty said that their office had 4 full time people at the county level to help in filling out the applications and to also answer any questions.

Unfinished Business

The Complaint form was brought up by the Supervisor for more discussion. Councilman Ford said that he had a chance to speak with the Town Attorney, and he felt that everyone has the right to know who is accusing them. The attorney did not see any problems at all with the complaint form. The question was brought up whether or not this would make more work for the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk asked what the complaint forms pertained to. Councilman Ford said that it would have nothing to do with highway. Councilman Ford said possibly anything where the town has an ordinance or code. It would be a situation where a resident has called the person that would enforce this and has gotten no where. Councilman McMurray said that to call whoever it is applicable first and if they can't get anywhere then they will fill out the complaint form. The complaint form will then be brought up to the Town Board.

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Resolution #47

Councilman McMurray motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to adopt the complaint form.

Vote: Ayes – 4 Noes – 0

Councilman Skiff chose not to vote on this subject.

County Report

The Supervisor reported that the county is still having a problem selling PVI. They have hired a person from Ohio to see if she can help save PVI. They have hired a group to come in and train the nurses

Privilege of the Floor

Nancy Maebus read a letter for the record that she had submitted for the record back in February 2010. This letter was in regards to zoning and how bad it would be for the Town of Cambridge. She stated that everyone is perfectly capable of governing their own land.

Astrid Davis, a resident of the town, had some questions concerning the High Speed Internet and the grant money that was received at county level. The Supervisor reported that \$100,000 was received and that \$20,000 of the grant money was used through the county for the Town of Cambridge. It was questioned whether or not the town could have tried something else if this internet did not work with Hudson Valley Wireless. The Supervisor answered Yes. The Supervisor reported that they had spoken with at least six internet providers including Verizon. He also stated that the future of the Town and the internet is wireless and that fiber optics would not be seen in the Town of Cambridge.

The property on County Rt. 74 was discussed and the court hearing for this will be April 10th at 6:00 PM. An agreement was reached and the owner did get rid of the animals and cleanup has taken place. LaVerne Davis Code Enforcement will be present to testify on the progress that has been made.

A resident questioned whether or not the dog renewals are still being sent through the mail. The Town Clerk reported that yes, the renewals would be sent out monthly and whatever month the resident renews, the renewal month will be the same every year.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk/Town of Cambridge

<http://www.townofcambridgeny.org>