

Regular Town Board Meeting
February 9, 2015

The Regular Meeting of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 9th day of February 2015 at the Town Hall, the following were present:

Supervisor Catherine Fedler
Councilman Douglas Ford
Councilman Gerald Skiff
Councilwoman Susan Herrington

Absent: Councilman McMurray

Others present: Heather Greenawalt Town Clerk, Rachael Holbrook Assessor, Ashleigh Morris Reporter from the Eagle, Bruce Bailey

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

Assessor Report

Rachael Holbrook the Assessor was present at the Town Board Meeting and reported the possible equalization rate claim would be 100%. She explains that if they claim 100% than everything would pretty much stay the same. She mentions that the issue right now is the numbers are coming in at 103%. If the Assessor claims 103% then the tax bill is going to show the Market Value 3% more than it is, she says that then she is going to have people coming in saying that they need their assessment lowered. She also explained if you go up to 103% and the tax rate goes down then next year when you go to 100% the tax rate will go up and you will be having this constant roller coaster. The Supervisor explained that the Town could stay at 100% and not change it. The Supervisor also explained that this is what happened before when they jumped the equalization rate up and it looked good. When it came back down then they were on that roller coaster that the assessor referred to. The Assessor explains that the property values are in line with the sales currently. She said that if you want to do a Town wide revaluation this could help even everything up. Supervisor Fedler said that this would cost approximately \$50,000. The Town Assessor said that would depend whether they did in house or outside. The Town Assessor said that she would go with the 100% and Steve Peluso from the State said the same thing. The sales that are being used are July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. When the sales are considered, a lot comes into play. The assessor explained that a lot of sales are thrown out. The sales that are considered are Residential, Farm and Vacant land, Commercial. She went on to explain possible sales that may get thrown out: family member to family member, Estate thing, multiple parcel, Government, and many others. It was also mentioned that you could not throw too many out or the state will not be very happy. Councilman Ford said that he would like to talk more with the Assessor before they make the decision. The Supervisor agreed that they all should talk with Rachael (the Town Assessor) individually and then possibly at the next meeting make a decision.

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The Assessor also reported that she had 7 Ag Building Exemptions, 179 Ag Exemptions inside the district total, 13 outside, 192 total Ag Exemptions, 171 Senior Exemptions/Enhanced (Senior 65 or older that make less than \$83,300 in the 2013 taxes), of that 171 Senior exemptions, 71 are considered Low Income (Aged Exemption). All renewal forms for exemptions are due on March 1st. Supervisor Fedler pointed out that it is a service that the Assessor sends out all of the renewal forms, it is not required that this be done. The only renewal that must be sent out is the senior exemption forms because that is required by the state. The Assessor has physically gone through the Ag Exemptions and there were some errors and she has corrected them. It was mentioned that some residents that had Ag Exemptions may not be very happy because there would be a change in the woodlot exemption. Only owners working their own land would be eligible for a woodlot exemption with 50 acres or more wooded.

Auditing of the Bills

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|---------|----------|-------------|
| General | #15 – 31 | \$ 3,619.00 |
| Highway | #10 – 23 | \$21,650.00 |

Supervisor’s Report

Resolution #12

Councilman Skiff motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Herrington to approve the Supervisor’s Report for January 2015.

Vote: Ayes – 4 Noes – 0

Supervisor Fedler handed out some figures that had been compiled by the Clerk to the Supervisor so that the Board Members could better understand that the money that they had budgeted for 2015. This paperwork was showing the money that was remaining after all bills were paid for 2014 and the money that was rolled over into the 2015 year. The Supervisor went on to explain the seriousness of the figures that remain because the budget for 2015 was balanced with the fund balances. Supervisor Fedler explained that the money that remained in the fund balances was not as high as they budgeted. The Supervisor went over the paperwork and explained that the top line was the amount in the unreserved balance in the beginning of the year and the middle unreserved balance at the end of the year and the bottom figure was the difference fund balance from the beginning of the year to the year end. She explained that this was 17 1/2% less money than they had last year. Councilman Ford tried to explain that if the money that is coming in (revenues) is not the same or more than the money that is going out then this should be a concern.

Approving the minutes

Resolution #13

Councilman Ford motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Herrington to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2015 meeting with the following corrections. The first correction is on

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page 8 about the 9th & 10th line down have “where” instead of “were”. The last sentence of that paragraph is also incomplete should read: There was a short discussion that something needs to be done with the hospital property and, if someone is willing to purchase it and spend his money to better the property, it should be considered. On page 7, the second paragraph, In March Steve Pallu is coming to do a presentation on the Medical Marijuana Units. Also on page 7, the 4th paragraph, the State is giving themselves until February 28th to get the tax reimbursement checks out. On Page 7, in paragraph 6, Supervisor Fedler said that the whole point of this paragraph was to show the importance of the shared services. The County Administrator and the County Treasurer will be going to all 17 towns to do presentations. The Supervisor said that the line that says, “The Supervisor has asked all 17 Town Boards to do a little presentation”, should be taken out of the minutes completely.

Vote: Ayes – 3 Noes – 0

Councilman Skiff abstained from the vote because he was not present at the January 20, 2015 meeting.

Supervisor Fedler said that all the checks have been sent out for the community funding: the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Senior Citizen, and Youth Commission. Supervisor Fedler said that she received a thank you from the Rescue Squad.

LaVerne Davis Code Enforcement Officer reported that everything was quiet; it is too cold and snowy to do anything. He said that he had inquiry about a possible new house in the spring.

Highway Report

Supervisor Fedler reported in Highway Superintendent’s absence. She reported that they have plowed a lot of snow. Some repairs have been done to the trucks. The sand pile is getting low and they may have to haul some more in. The salt supply is fine. The Highwaymen have had long days and the loops have been taking 2 1/2 to 3 hours, one day the men did seven trips. The Supervisor commented that was a long day. Councilman Skiff and Supervisor Fedler said that they have not had any complaints on the roads. Councilwoman Herrington said that she would like the Highway report written.

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported that the Town had received a thank you note from the Senior Citizens.

Town Clerk Report

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported that the total amount collected in taxes so far is \$1,448,563.98. The Town Clerk reported that she has reconciled with the Town Supervisor and the remaining money has been paid to the Washington County Treasurer.

Planning Board Report

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Town Clerk Greenawalt reported in Sally Eddy's absence. The Town of Cambridge Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting, Thursday, January 8, 2015, 7:30 PM, at the Town Hall with 5 members present and 3 attendees from the public. The following items of business were addressed:

1. Granted sketch plan approval to Gretchen & David Wilmot for an approximately 6 acre subdivision. The Wilmot's own a 21.9 acre parcel along Belle Road with the road splitting the property. On the north side of the road there are approximately 7 acres containing the Wilmot's House. On the south side are approximately 15 acres which contains an existing mobile home that has been rented for several years. The Wilmot's wish to parcel off a 6 acre lot with mobile home to convey to the renters. Gretchen Wilmot was at the meeting presenting the proposal. She was directed with the survey.
2. Councilman Gerald Skiff updated the members with the progress of the plans for the former Mary McClellan Hospital facility and the surrounding land to be developed into a hospitality complex, "Cambridge Club Inn. "Mr. Skiff brought copies of the proposal and each member received one. Israeli developer Gideon Raviv of 68 Burns Development, Inc, New York City in partnership with Monarch Design Group LLC of Montana is the principal presenters. The development of the site is proposed to take place in three distinct phases. First phase, construct a support facility in the parking lot; second, renovate the main complex and whatever surrounding buildings that can be saved into a resort facility and third, develop the remaining land into trails with about 70 small cottages for longer term stay. Councilman Skiff has been attending the village meetings addressing this matter and it appears to be favorable. However, no permits have been approved or given to date. The total proposal involves about 102 acres, 19 of which are in the town. The meeting of the village planning board is Wednesday, January 14, 7:00 PM. Councilman Skiff urged the planning board members to attend.

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt also reported on the February Planning Board Meeting. The Town of Cambridge, Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting, Thursday, February 5, 2015, 7:30 PM, at the Town Hall with 7 members present and 3 members from the public.

1. New Member Leon Barkley was welcomed by Chairman Pearson and board members.
2. Chairman Pearson and member Bob Hamilton gave a brief report about the Village of Cambridge Planning Board meeting they attended on January 14 which was about the future development plan for the former Mary McClellan Hospital facility. At the meeting, which was not open for public comment, the planning board reviewed each question and answer of the environmental assessment long form and

found several answers to be incomplete or in need of further explanation. The questions will be redirected to the developer at a future meeting. Chairman Pearson confirmed the Village Board of Trustees has hired an engineer to assist with the project.

3. Richard Austin presented a proposal to combine a very small triangular tract of land, less than 1 acre, to an adjacent 16.6 acre parcel already owned by him on Gannon Road. The small tract of land is located between the road and his property. The triangular piece belongs to a larger piece of property owned by Walter Korb, Jr. but the road separates it. The Planning Board determined the action does not constitute a subdivision since no standalone subdivision will be created but will be combined with an already existing property. Chairman Pearson recommended Mr. Austin meet with Mr. Korb, do the necessary transactions so that Mr. Austin owns the property and then contact the Assessor's Office for the combining of the two pieces of land into one.

The Town Supervisor and the Chair to the Planning Board have talked a couple times about the Hospital Property and what is going on. The Supervisor had brought a map to the meeting that anyone could view of the Hospital Property. She mentioned that it all lay in the Town. One parcel is in the Village and the other parcel is solely the Town. The Planning board would like the Town Board to put up a resolution to send to the village saying that the Town Board and the Planning Board would like to be informed so that they do not proceed without the Town.

Resolution #14

Councilman Ford motioned,

Seconded by Councilman Skiff,

Be It Resolved, that the Cambridge Town Board and the Planning Board requests copies of any current and all future information on possible development of Tax Map #263.7-1-1 (102 acres) and Tax Map #263.-2-5 (19.7 acres) formerly known as the Mary McClellan Hospital Property.

Be It Further Resolved, The Town of Cambridge Planning Board requests to be informed on all steps of the project concerning parcel Tax Map #263.-2-5 (19.7 acres) including the Environmental Impact Studies prior to any final decisions. The Town of Cambridge Planning Board reserves the right to approve or deny any studies or resolutions on the parcel Tax Map #263.-2-5 which resides solely in the Town of Cambridge.

Vote: Ayes – 4 Noes – 0

Old Business

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Supervisor Fedler mentioned that the Town Board needed to look at the old Policies and do updates.

New Business

Supervisor Fedler said that needed to make a decision on a mileage and schooling policy. There was a question if there should be a credit card policy for the town. Councilman Skiff mentioned that there was an article in the Talk of the Towns about mileage policy and who can and who can't and the legalities.

Supervisor Fedler handed out some more paperwork to the Town Board on the 2014 year end unreserved Fund Balances. She said that if there were any questions they could be directed to the Clerk to the Supervisor or the Supervisor. Supervisor Fedler said that this is being brought forward now because this will give the Board plenty of time before budget to understand everything for the future. Councilman Skiff said that when the supervisor talked to Margaret Shaw, the Clerk to the Supervisor, to thank her for all her hard work.

County Report

The Supervisor reported that Kevin Hayes is retiring from the County Administrator position. They are putting a lot of effort into this change for the County. Mr. Hayes has been there for a long time and is very knowledgeable; this will be a large loss for the county at the end of the year. The County is working through this and questioning whether they want to change the parameters of the job. The new DPW Superintendent that was hired last year is doing well. They are still discussing the arming of the Probation Officers. They are also still discussing the selling of the remaining PVI property.

Town Board

Councilwoman Herrington mentioned the Town Cleanup Day is in April. She said that maybe they could decide at the next meeting on a date. She will discuss details with Alan, the Highway Superintendent. It was suggested that the weekend of the Bike Race be avoided.

There being no further business before the Town Board, the meeting was moved and carried for adjournment at 9:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk/Town of Cambridge

<http://www.townofcambridgeny.org>