

Regular Town Board Meeting

March 9, 2012

At the Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 12th of March, 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: Heather Greenawalt Town Clerk, Dick Sutherland, Rani Bass, Gene & Lucinda Giemza, Sue Herrington, Henry Peabody, Elton Balch, Ted Berndt, Dick Battistoni, Leon Barkley, Bob Hamilton, Ray Gardnier, Ashleigh Morris from the Eagle, Alan Davis, Astrid Davis, Liam McMurray, Holly McMurray, Town Justice Janet DeCarlo, Terry Hamilton, Bonnie Farellel, Tony Millington, LaVerne Davis Code Enforcement, Scott Keller Town Attorney, Jim Buckley Sr., Charlie Pearson, Norm Scribner

Audit of the Bills

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

General	#60 – 88	\$29,739.10
Highway	#21 – 28	\$11,144.45

Approving of the Minutes

Resolution #30

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2012 and the February 23, 2012 meetings. There was a couple of corrections on the February 13, 2012 meeting minutes on page 5 where it reads that, “Many residents were present from the Town and they voiced their concerns about passing this animal control law.” It was suggested that it be added that Members of the public disagreed with these statements. The second correction was on page 1 under the Executive Session portion it should read, “the Old Mary McClellan Hospital.”

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Budget Amendment

Resolution #31

Councilman Ford motioned,

Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler,

A budget amendment to increase the Special Fire Fund by \$1,257.66 to pay the balance due on the Cambridge Fire Contract is hereby made.

Whereas, the tax base being part-town, the said amount will be transferred from the “B” interest bearing account to the General checking account in order to pay the remainder due (\$1,257.66) to the Village of Cambridge.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Supervisor’s Report

Resolution #32

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to approve the February 2012 Supervisor’s report.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Regular Town Board Meeting
March 9, 2012

Supervisor Watkins mentioned that there is controversy about this Animal Control Law; he said that it has been tabled. He said that this Law is not going to be adopted at this time and probably never will be adopted.

Executive Session

Resolution #33

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman McMurray to go into executive session for discussion on a personnel matter.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Entered into Executive Session at 7:29 PM.

Resolution #34

Councilwoman Fedler motioned, Seconded by Councilman McMurray to come out of Executive Session.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes - 0

Exited out of Executive Session at 7:43 PM.

Supervisor Watkins informed everyone that LaVerne Davis the Code Enforcement Officer is thinking about retiring and this is what they needed to discuss in executive session.

Ted Berndt a resident of the town mentioned that it was possible that the Town Board had violated the Open Meetings Law because of the things discussed in executive session at the last meeting. Mr. Berndt questioned why LaVerne Davis was in this executive session. Councilwoman Fedler said that he was needed to answer questions pertaining to Code Enforcement issues on the falling barn on County Route 59.

Assessor Report

Supervisor Watkins reported that Assessor Jeffrey Jackson, Attorney Scott Keller, Supervisor Watkins and Mr. Peluso from the New York State Office of Real Property Services had a meeting to discuss different possibilities pertaining to the equalization rate. Mr. Peluso is a CRM (Customer Relation Manger) for New York State. The reason for this meeting was that the town would have an equalization rate of 104%, so there was discussion on whether or not to do a Reval to equal everything out again. A resident of the town questioned what this means. Were they going around and looking at property or are they taking the value of the property and a comparable property. The Supervisor explained it like this that the State has a scoring system from 1 to 15, 15 the highest and 1 being the lowest. The Town of Cambridge is a 10 which means our town records are better than average. This means that the Assessor won't have to go back and do measurements those records are all still good, he would only need to view each property. The public also questions if the data reveals that the property is no longer valued as high will the assessment come down. The Supervisor responded possibly. Supervisor Watkins requested that a motion be made to do a Reval to update the files.

Regular Town Board Meeting
March 9, 2012

Councilwoman Fedler said that she would like to look into this more that her concerns were a potential budget issue. Leon Barkley a resident of the Town said that it might be a good idea to check with the Town of Greenwich because they have been doing a Reval every year for years.

Resolution #35

Supervisor Watkins motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to table the discussion of doing a Reval every year until this is looked into further.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported that there will be a Seminar for Town Clerks on April 23 – 25th. She is requesting the Town Board to pass a resolution for her to attend on April 23rd and the 24th. However, she also made them aware that her deputy would not be able to fill in so the Town Clerk's office will have to close these two days. The board asked if a notice could be put in the paper to notify the public. The Town Clerk said that would not be a problem. A notice will be put in the paper.

Resolution #36

Supervisor Watkins motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to give the Town Clerk permission to attend the Town Clerk Seminar on the 23rd and 24th of April.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

The Town Clerk also reported that the delinquent tax letters have gone out as of March 9, 2012. The taxes will go back to the Washington County Treasurer on April 3, 2012, the last day to pay with the 2% penalty is March 31, 2012 and the last day to pay in the office is April 2, 2012.

Town Board

Councilwoman Fedler asked Scott Keller, the Town Attorney, if Mr. Wrigley, the former Town Attorney, had followed up with the paperwork that he was asked to do at the last meeting. Mr. Keller stated that he received a letter from his office that he had sent through. Councilwoman Fedler also asked Alan Davis, the Highway Superintendent, if he had done the paper work that she had requested and submitted it to the Town Clerk for the record.

Councilman Ford reported that he had a lot of phone calls on the Animal Control Law.

Norm Scribner a concerned citizen came in during the meeting and made everyone aware that they had to find a new place for the food pantry which is now located in the senior citizens building, in the Village of Cambridge. They have to be out by Friday, March 16th.

Councilman McMurray reported that he received the same kind of calls as Councilman Ford.

Regular Town Board Meeting
March 9, 2012

Councilman Skiff reported that he was looking at the Town Website and he wondered if the Agenda should be posted the week before the Town Board Meeting. Councilman McMurray mentioned that a time frame should not be put on this, as soon as it is available it will be put on the website, and this is only a tentative agenda.

Planning Board

In Sally Eddy's absence Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt reported. The Town of Cambridge Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting, Thursday, March 8, 2012, 7:30 at the Town Hall. Six members were present along with seven members from the public, among them Supervisors Watkins, Councilman McMurray and Attorney Scott Keller.

The following business was addressed:

1. Granted Preliminary Approval to the Cleo Ford, Martha Ford and Ronald Ford minor subdivision. The Fords own a total of 97.0 farm acres on Edie Road & Stevenson Road. Even though Ron Ford's name is currently on the deed, the purpose of the subdivision is to make Ron the sole owner of 49 acres of the property. The proposed subdivision includes all land east of Edie Road with exception of a workshop which Cleo will keep. Edie Road will provide the dividing line. Stevenson Road bounds the subdivision to the south. Cleo and Martha will retain the remaining 48 acres. A public hearing will be held at the April meeting.
2. Granted approval to Colleen Sacala for a revised sketch plan for the John Weaver property at 744 State Route 372. Ms Sacala is representing Mr. Weaver who owns 180.97 acres. Originally, only one new lot was proposed, but the proposal has been changed to include two lots. Route 372 splits the property and will provide the dividing line. The subdivision involves all land, approximately 120 acres, south of the road and consists of approximately a 42 acre lot and a 78 acre lot. Mr. Weaver will retain the remaining acreage north of the road. Mr. Sacala was directed to proceed with the survey.
3. Supervisor Watkins addressed the board again about the need to develop framework to prevent or control unsuitable practices or businesses from coming into the town, such as junk yards, dumps, airports, rendering plant, etc. Presently, research is being done to discern in what manner they can be controlled, i.e. through ordinances, zoning or through a comprehensive plan. He suggested forming a five person point group to steer the process. He has contacted a person who is willing to come and talk to the town about the issues of concern and lend her expertise in solving the matters. A discussion took place between Mr. Watkins and planning board members with input from Attorney Keller and Councilman McMurray. In conclusion, the planning board expressed that the town board should take the leadership to get the process started. It was recommended that the concept of controlling or preventing certain practices or businesses from coming into the town be put on a town board agenda for full town board discussion. Get their input and suggestions. Vote to go forward or not. The process has to start with the town board.

Regular Town Board Meeting
March 9, 2012

A resident of the community questioned who wants this zoning, planning or even comprehensive plan. Councilwoman Fedler said that there will be a discussion next month on what people want the town board to look for when considering planning for the town.

Communications

The Supervisor received a call from a young lady concerning Agricycle.

Unfinished Business

Supervisor Watkins discussed the complaint form that was tabled from last month. He said that he had made a motion to adopt it with minor changes such as taking off the birthday and adding that the person must be 18 years old to file. Councilman Ford said that he would like to table this for one more month. He stated that he is not opposed to it but he has a problem with anonymous complaints. In America you have the right to know who is accusing you and what you are being accused of. Councilman Ford did mention that when he dies he would like to be known for the invasive laws that he squashed, not the ones that he helped bring in. So, Mr. Ford would like to check with the Town Attorney on a few other things to see if there are any legal aspects to this. The Supervisor did say that if they get a complaint for the Highway Department that should go directly to Mr. Davis. Other complaints will come to the board and they will review them. Councilman McMurray stated that this doesn't stop the public from calling Alan Davis or any other public official directly; this is just starting a paper trail. The public is encouraged to call the person directly. Alan Davis suggested that he would like it to stay the way that it is, rather than having a written complaint.

Jim Buckley a resident of the town had a concern about people dumping in the town dump that weren't authorized. The truck that he saw that was dumping was not a name from around here. He suggested that if there are people dumping that they should have to pay the town money, he said that people are abusing this privilege. Councilman Ford said that Mahar is doing the construction work for a house that is being built in Cambridge. He said that these people are going to be paying a lot of taxes in Cambridge on this house and he does not see where this is a big issue. Councilman Skiff said that he would look into this.

Mr. Buckley asked why the robberies that are going on in the Town of Cambridge haven't been mentioned. Supervisor Watkins said that there had been over 16 robberies in the Town of Cambridge. Mr. Buckley said that there should be notice out there. Supervisor Watkins said that he was going to cover this at the section of the agenda of privilege of the floor.

Notice from the county that the speed limits will be changed on Duell Hollow Road and South Road to 45 MPH. It was questioned on what part of Duell Hollow Road and it was stated it would be the enter road from Turnpike to King Road. South Road is from 59 to the County line.

Next month will be Town clean up month. The county will take refuge from the towns at no charge, and the towns just have to keep track of this. The garbage bags will be available at the Town Highway Garage. Then the collected garbage can be dropped off at the Highway Garage.

Regular Town Board Meeting

March 9, 2012

County Report

They are still fighting over selling the Pleasant Valley Infirmary, and they are still concerned with whether or not they can sell it.

Privilege of the Floor

There was more discussion about the robberies that were happening in the town and it was thought to be a blue car with two young men. However, no one knows for certain. Concerned residents are questioning why this hasn't been put in the paper.

Highway Report

The Highway men have spent several days cutting trees and brush on Conley, Gannon and Whiteside Roads. They plowed their 1st snow storm on March 1st. They have also plowed and/or sanded several small nuisance storms, maintenance was done on truck after each storm. Truck #2 has been back in the shop and will hopefully be repaired. This was under warranty. They also put a new cutting edge on the grader and replaced all teeth on the rake. There was a furnace malfunction and Chuck repaired this. Some of the intersections have been swept, they have also put the water tank on the truck and they are now ready for sweeping. Aflac insurance made a presentation to 3 of the interested highway employees. With this insurance there is no cost to the town. The employee pays the whole cost. Alan Davis just received the Nationalgrid audit back tonight and he hasn't had a chance to read it completely. There will definitely be savings, the lights need to be replaced and the payback is not as quickly as he would like to see it. He also handed out a copy of the purchase schedule, he thinks that they need to start looking at replacing the pickup truck. It was discussed about possibly looking at getting a F450 with a sander instead of a 1 ton pickup so that if more county roads are taken on then the F450 could sand the lanes. Councilwoman Fedler said that he could always look for trucks, the board does not have to give him permission to do this. When he gathers the information he can present it to the board.

Mr. Berndt a resident from the Town asked the Supervisor what the outcome of the teleconference was with Washington County LDC. The Supervisor said that they didn't have one because Verizon would not come to the table. Mr. Berndt asked if High Speed Internet was a dead issue. The Supervisor responded back, "not in our town."

Councilman McMurray asked Alan Davis if he was looking for board approval to look into getting a larger truck. McMurray stated that if he was, he is on board with investigating into it. Councilman Skiff mentioned that he was, also. Councilwoman Fedler questioned whether or not the pickup that the town has now could go another year?

A resident of the town questioned what happened with Verizon. It was thought that Verizon was going to participate with the town. The Supervisor stated that they dropped out and the Town is not going to do fiber optics or any kind of solid wire installation. The Town of Cambridge will be going all wireless. The county has the grant through Betty Little's office and the money is being spent on the internet for the Town of Fort Ann, Argyle and Cambridge.

Regular Town Board Meeting
March 9, 2012

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk/Town of Cambridge

<http://www.townofcambridgeny.org>