

Town Board Meeting
October 11, 2010

At the Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 11th day of October 2010, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall the following were present:

Supervisor William Watkins
Councilwoman Catherine Fedler
Councilman Ted Berndt
Councilman Frank Ziehm
Councilman Alan Davis

Others present: Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt, Code Enforcement LaVerne Davis, Town Justice Janet DeCarlo, Jimmy Stannard, Melissa Stannard Deputy Town Clerk, Dieter Drake, Scott Keller, Nancy Maebus, Dick Sutherland, Astrid Davis, Sue Herrington, Megan Farrell, Henry Peabody, Rani Bass, Terry Hamilton, Dick Bastistoni, Jeff Jackson Town Assessor, Francis Moon, Jim Buckley, Gerald Skiff, Danny Thomas, Kim Scott-Miller

Supervisor Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and immediately led in moment of silence for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. A Pledge of Allegiance to the flag followed.

Resolution # 103

Councilman Berndt motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler to approve minutes of the September 20, 2010 Town Board Meeting with four corrections. The first one being on the bottom of page #9 where it reads Councilwoman Fedler mentioned that the state mandates where held back this sentence is to be disregarded and instead should read, Councilwoman Fedler mentioned that she was looking ahead to 2012 for possible expenses so to keep the budget at a reasonable range. The second correction is on page 9 also in the last paragraph instead of a .074% raise in taxes it should read a .74% raise in taxes. The third correction is on the top of page 2 the Local Law goes back to 1984 instead of 1954. The fourth correction is on page 6 in the second paragraph there is a spelling error the sentence should read Which basically says you can take two or more contiguous townships instead of contagious townships

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Supervisor's Report.

Resolution#104

Councilman Berndt motioned, Seconded by Councilman Davis to approve the September 2010 Supervisor's Report.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Assessor

Jeffry Jackson the town Assessor was present at the meeting to answer questions from the residents of the town. Supervisor Watkins asked Mr. Jackson if there was a reason the Town should do a reevaluation of the properties in the township. Mr. Jackson stated that he believed that the previous board had passed a resolution supporting to do timely reassessments to maintain a 100% equalization rate. The Assessor states as it stands right now he just received from the state samples that they are using to establish RAR (Residential Assessment Ratio). Basically this sample shows samples of different

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properties and their selling prices and assessed rates now. He goes on to give examples of properties in 2009 with the selling price \$139,500 currently that property is assessed at \$136,700, another property sold April 9, 2010 for 177,900 and it's assessed for \$176,000, and also another property sold on September 30, 2009 that was sold for \$187,500 and is now assessed for \$186,600. With these numbers the Town will be filing with the state a request to have the equalization rate this coming year at 100%. Mr. Jackson stated that with these figures in mind and the previous resolution from the Town Board in 2009 the intent was to keep the equalization rate at 100% with the reevaluation every year. Mr. Jackson stated that if the equalization rate was to stay at 100% than there was no reason for a reevaluation of the properties of the Town of Cambridge. Jeff Jackson went on to explain that because we are still seeing a settling of the market, this would be another reason to hold off. For the purpose of maintaining 100% equalization rate this will be achieved with the sales samples that were submitted by the state which the state is now using to set the equalization rate for next year.

Residents of the Town had the chance to ask questions of Jeffry Jackson the Assessor after he finished speaking. Their main concerns were the equalization rate for next year and which properties the state was using to establish this rate. Jeffry Jackson stated that there will always be changes in the town, the question that Jeff was asked was if he feels it would benefit the town to have a reevaluation. Jeffry Jackson stated that he did not see the need right now especially with the market and the economy the way that it is at this point. Mr. Jackson stated that he still will look at individual properties if the need be.

Resolution#105

Supervisor Watkins motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler to not do a reevaluation this year for 2011.

Vote: Aye – 5 Noes - 0

Councilwoman Fedler asked Mr. Jackson if there was a certain time that he would have to know by in order to do a reevaluation for the town. Mr. Jackson stated that possibly if the Town Board was going to do a reevaluation for 2011 than they should consider adopting a resolution for May 2011 to get the process going.

Resolution#106

Councilman Ziehm motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler to amend the previous resolution#105 that the reevaluation for the Town of Cambridge will be looked at next year.

Vote: Aye – 5 Noes – 0

Some of the residents of the Town of Cambridge questioned whether or not the town has appropriated in the budget for the reevaluation. Supervisor Watkins stated that this was already put in by the previous administration for the amount of \$5,000.

Town Board

Councilman Berndt updated everyone that the Old Hospital was filming a horror film he had spoke with the Nicole Kielbeko the owner.

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Councilman Berndt also questioned the Supervisor whether or not there was any new information on the alleged break in back in March at the Town Hall. The Supervisor stated that he had talked with Trooper Saunders and he is supposed to be giving the Supervisor a report; however he has not seen it yet.

Councilman Berndt also questioned if there was updates on health insurance for the full time employees. The Supervisor stated that there would be an 11% increase and the provider would be CDCHP, this program was the most similar to the one that the town already had. Mr. Berndt questioned if a letter had gone out to the full time employees regarding this. The Supervisor stated not yet.

The Supervisor asked Mr. Berndt if he had a Resolution for Cpl. Charte, he said no but one probably should be put together for the next meeting.

Town Clerk

Heather Greenawalt the Town Clerk reported on the Town Law that is being worked on for the Dog Licensing Law for the Town of Cambridge. She made the Board aware that they need to make a decision on how much the Town will charge for dog licenses. The Town Clerk has spoken with the Town of Greenwich and the Town of Jackson about the Law and the Costs. The town of Greenwich has made a decision to go with \$10.00 for spayed/neutered and \$20.00 for unspayed/unneutered. However, for the Town of Cambridge, the Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt suggested that they charge \$5.00 for spayed/neutered and \$15.00 for unspayed/unneutered.

Resolution #107

Councilman Ziehm motioned, Seconded by Councilman Davis to charge \$5.00 spayed/neutered dogs, and \$15.00 for unspayed/unneutered dogs for the new Town Law, and to give the Town Clerk permission to send a copy of a sample Town Law to the Town Lawyer Alan Wrigley.

Vote: Aye – 5 Noes – 0

Planning Board

Supervisor Watkins asked Danny Thomas what was discussed at the last meeting. Danny reported because there was no quorum, Eric Pearson the Chair of the planning board, and Mark Rogers were absent, so there was no discussion.

Highway Superintendent's Report

In Highway Superintendent's Eric Shaw's absence Councilwoman Fedler reported.
-The Highway crew attended an 8 hour safety training day to fulfill requirements by insurance company, PESH and MSHA.
-Mowing of the roadsides has been finished; some spots are being "touched up".
-The fuel tank on the 2003 Sterling had to be replaced due to leaking caused by rust under the straps. The price to repair the original one would have cost \$1,050; instead we purchased a new aluminum one for \$1,164.

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- The Bridge project is totally completed. The total figures on the blacktop are not in yet but we will be within the estimated projection amount.
- The drawing of sand has been finished with a total of 1,009 yards.
- Stone dust was drawn to take advantage of the price drop from \$4 per ton to \$1.50 per ton.
- A number of signs around the Town were repaired or replaced.
- Winter equipment will be readied within the next few weeks.

Code Enforcement

The problems that were mentioned last meeting have been solved LaVerne Davis reported. The permit has been received for the garage; the fence has been put up around the pool, and a permit and check for the mobile home were received. There is report of a new house going up on King Rd., and a barn that is going to be moved over by Earl Hortons farm which goes with the Horse Farm Chestnut Ridge. On Rt. 74 just past Darwin Rd a lot is being cleared this year and next year the gentleman is planning on building, it's going to be a modular. Remodeling job is being done on Irish Lane. Councilman Berndt questioned the permit on the mobile home and what the year and manufacturer were. LaVerne Davis Code Enforcement stated Ritz Craft was the craftsman and the year was 1991. The board members questioned about whether all the paperwork was in place for this mobile home. Councilman Berndt questioned whether the power had been turned on. LaVerne Davis stated that the power had been on for a long time, and the condition of the home was average. LaVerne also stated the inspection was done by a professional electrician and the responsibility of the power was the electrician's problem and Nationalgrids problem. Councilman Davis stated that the application and the check have been received and the mobile home has passed inspection so why not approve the permit.

Councilman Berndt suggested that the discussion be tabled until all documentation regarding this matter can be reviewed. The Supervisor asked him what other documentation he was looking for. Many residents from the town commented that if Nationalgrid had turned the power on then the mobile home must have passed the inspection. Councilman Berndt wanted to know if the electrical inspector had inspected the trailer and put the green sticker on the box, and according to Mr. Davis he has not observed one. It was suggested by Scott Keller a resident that the application be approved contingent upon verification of inspection.

Resolution #108

Councilman Berndt motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler to approve the application of the mobile home on English Rd., contingent upon verification of inspection.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Communications

The High Speed Internet Committee met at Congressman Murphy's office on September 22, 2010 with Mark Lucioni District Representative for Congressman Murphy, the items that were discussed were Congressman Murphy's willingness to help but no immediate solution from USDA rural services. One of the things that Dr. Bill Figlozzi talked about

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was Universal Service Fee, this is where pennies are drawn out of every phone bill however this is blocked from being used for internet. In Rural municipalities possible that people that want High Speed Internet are willing to pay a premium, whether a private company will come and pay and cover the cost to bring this out to rural areas. Terry Dwyer with Verizon Operations out of Ballston Spa stated that Cambridge is the only Rural Municipality in his catch man area which includes Clinton, Essex, Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Rensselaer Counties that is actively lobbying for high speed internet, other than the West Hoosick people constantly calling to bring internet to the rural areas. Dieter Drake stated that he had some contacts with Senator Schumer office, he can probably get him to send another letter.

Town Justice

Town Justice Janet DeCarlo reported that the Jcap Grant has been submitted for \$30,000 which is the maximum amount for the grant that you can put in. The Town Justice has had two contractors come to the Town Hall to look at the various items on the list of the resolution that was passed, now have to wait and see if the Town is approved.

Tour of the Battenkill (Dieter Drake)

Dieter Drake was present at the meeting seeking a resolution for the 7th Annual Tour of the Battenkill Cycling Race which will be held in April 2011, he handed out to the board a brief letter and also a map of the latest route. The dates are as follows Saturday, April 9, 2011 Ride2Recovery to benefit disabled Veterans – non-competitive, Sunday, April 10, 2011 Tour of the Battenkill Pro/Am event, Saturday, April 16, 2011 Tour of the Battenkill Professional Men & Women. Proceeds of the event will benefit various local organizations, including the Cambridge Youth Commission, Cambridge Valley Rescue Squad, and Farm Team Cycling – an area youth cycling team.

Resolution #109

Councilman Ziehm motioned, Seconded by Councilman Davis to Support the Tour of the Battenkill that will be held on the dates of April 9, 10, 16 of 2011.

Vote: Aye – 5 Noes – 0

Budget – Public Hearing

Supervisor stated that a date must be setup for a Public Hearing for the budget. Councilman Berndt stated that he wondered if it was possible to setup a workshop for the budget in the next couple weeks. The Supervisor stated that a workshop was not needed this far along in the budget, so a public hearing could be scheduled. Councilman Berndt stated that it was his understanding that on the 23rd of September Councilwoman Fedler and Supervisor Watkins meet about the budget with Margaret Shaw Clerk to the Supervisor. Councilwoman Fedler stated yes they meet and only one change was made and that was emailed to all the board members. Councilman Berndt, Councilman Ziehm, and Councilman Davis, stated that they would like to have a workshop to talk over the budget. October 25th was decided on for the Date for the Public Hearing and Workshop on the Budget which will be held at the Town Hall at 7:00 PM. Councilwoman Fedler

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made everyone aware that a copy of the tentative budget is available at the Town Clerks office for the cost of .25 per page.

Consolidation of the Court System

Councilman Berndt brought up the unresolved issue of the consolidation of the Court System and how last month it was not tabled or a resolution was not passed to pursue this further. Councilman Berndt stated that he has a couple calls into Kevin Reilly however he has not heard back from Mr. Reilly yet. Mr. Berndt stated that he would like the board to consider possibly having council from OCA get together with council from the Comptrollers office and also have a representative from our town and extend an invitation to the other towns. The purpose is to find out if these two laws of Section 106A and 106B do actually apply to our town or not, and if they don't than we drop it. Supervisor Watkins wanted to know if Councilman Berndt had talked to the other towns he stated yes he had talked to Supervisor Brown from the Town of Jackson and Supervisor Shay from the Town of Whitecreek and they both said they would pass the information on to the boards.

Resolution #110

Councilman Berndt motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ziehm to continue researching the consolidation of the Court Systems.

Vote: Ayes – 4 Noes – 1

Councilwoman Fedler – Noe
Councilman Ziehm – Aye
Councilman Davis – Aye

Supervisor Watkins - Aye
Councilman Berndt - Aye

Councilwoman Fedler stated that she was opposed because she felt that if other towns were not even open to this than a lot of time was being spent wasted on something that is going no where. Councilman Berndt stated that no time was being wasted he was just waiting on a couple of phone calls. Councilman Berndt stated that his concern was with the grant money that was being received for the Town Justices Mr. Ackley for \$20,000 and Justice Sica from Whitecreek received \$30,000, and now possibly Justice DeCarlo grant for \$30,000, this money must come from some where. The question was could a grant for \$40,000 for the three towns combined help rather than \$80,000 for all three towns. Because essentially the money always come from the tax payers. Councilwoman Fedler did state that this grant money would not only be used for the Justice System but for improvements to our Town Hall.

County Report

Supervisor Watkins reported on the 20th of October Mr. Skiff and Supervisor Watkins will be going to Fort Edward to pickup food for the Greenwich and the Cambridge Food Pantry. Seth Pitts the Supervisor from Salem started this program this year he has contacted Mrs. Decker from the Town of Cambridge and Marilyn Rogers from the Town of Greenwich Food Pantries. Councilman Ziehm asked if this was a weekly thing

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Supervisor stated no only yearly, this food will help many people in the winter months to come.

Privilege of the Floor

Nancy Maebus read a letter pertaining to the Court Consolidation discussion on September 20, 2010 and submitted it to the Town Board for the record. Councilman Berndt requested that if letters were to be read verbatim by the public that they are photocopied and one copy be given to everyone on the Board.

Audit the Bills

General	#174 – 185	\$8,012.83
Highway	#105 – 116	\$9,334.54

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk