

Town Board Minutes
November 10, 2008

At a Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 10th day of November 2008, 7:30 PM, at the Town Hall, the following were present:

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

Others present: Town Clerk Sally Eddy, Highway Supt. Eric Shaw, LaVerne Davis, Evan Lawrence, Meaghan Wilkins, William McCarty and approximately 35 members of the public.

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

Minutes

Councilman Joel Nichols motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Carol Imhof, to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the October 13, 2008 meeting and approve them as mailed by the Town Clerk.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

No Items to be Added to Agenda

Supervisor's Report

1. The monthly financial reports were reviewed and commented upon.
Councilman Frank Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Carol Imhof, to approve the October 2008 General and Highway financial reports.
Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes
2. Supervisor Trinkle and husband Carl, along with Eric & Margaret Shaw, recently attended the annual banquet for the Village of Cambridge Fire Department.
3. Received from Attorney Alan Wrigley a new dog shelter contract between Edward Holland/Nancy Quell and the Town of Cambridge. The shelter is located at 1097 North Road, Greenwich, NY 12834. The length of term of contract is from January 1, 2008 thru December 31, 2008 with automatic renewal unless otherwise terminated.
4. She and Councilman Ziehm attended the Nov. 6 Planning Board meeting. They listened to County Planner Chris DeBolt discuss planning issues with the board and learned that there is little the town can do to control development short of zoning.
5. Met with DEC, Town of Hoosick Supervisor Marilyn Douglas and representatives from Roy McDonald's and Kirsten Gillabrand's office at the Buskirk Fire Department in an attempt to resolve a dispute between the fire department and DEC. When the department tore down a building, they pushed the bricks to the back of the property apparently in a wetland area. DEC was going to fine the department \$8200 but decided

to drop it when the Town of Cambridge and the Town of Hoosick highway departments offered to help remove the bricks. The fire department will try to find a site to deposit the bricks that's approved by DEC.

Town Board Report

Councilman Ted Berndt stated he has had numerous telephone conversations with Verizon at the Glens Falls office and no one there can make a decision about extending high speed internet service to the town nor give an estimate of the dollar amount.

Planning Board

Secretary Sally Eddy stated the Planning Board met Nov. 6 and addressed the following:

1. Held a public hearing and granted Final Approval to the David & Janet DeCarlo minor subdivision on Cambridge-Battenville Road. The subdivision consisted of .51 acres and contained a house.
2. There is a 3 parcel subdivision proposed for 42 Frog Way by owners Patrick Hickey and Jennifer Salluzzo. All properties on Frog Way have a deeded 50 ft right of way to use the private road from the road owners. At the October meeting, Preliminary Approval was granted contingent upon the determination of Attorney Alan Wrigley that the proposed lots would each have an easement to use Frog Way. Attorney Wrigley stated that as long as each lot has road frontage then each will have an easement. A public hearing is scheduled for the December meeting.
3. Granted a one acre boundary line adjustment to Johnny Hatfield at 75 King Road. By error, Mr. Hatfield's driveway has encroached on his neighbor's property about 15 feet. His neighbor, Francis Alzo, has agreed to adjust the property line 65 ft to the north to accommodate Mr. Hatfield.
4. Chris DeBolt, from the County Planning Department, was present to discuss with the board what can and cannot be included in the subdivision regulations as the board works on updating the regs. Mr. DeBolt said the town has nothing in place to control development. However, there is very little you can do short of zoning.

Highway Superintendent

1. Shoulders were cut and ditching was done at various places throughout the Town as well as cutting brush.
2. The grading of roads was finished for the year.
3. Peabody & Bates inspected all of our trucks. All trucks passed with only some spring repairs needed.
4. The plow equipment is all ready for the upcoming season when the need arises.
5. The shop was set up to accommodate voting for the General Election.

No Code Enforcement Report

Assessor's Report

1. Normal activities in the assessor's office were suspended for a portion of the report period due to illness.
2. The later part of the report period saw a resumption of normal activities. Recorded sales, since March 1, have been keyed to the file with additional updating underway.
3. Quarterly sales were compiled and reported to the NYS Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) in anticipation of the October 10, 2008 cut off date for inclusion with the residential assessment ratio survey to be released in 2009.
4. Preparation of the upcoming exemption renewal process got underway during the report period.

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Unfinished Business

Comprehensive Plan

Resolution by Councilwoman Carol Imhof

Seconded by Councilman Joel Nichols

RESOLVED and DETERMINED, that the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge does hereby reject the Comprehensive Plan.

Vote: Supervisor Trinkle – Aye	Councilman Berndt – Aye
Councilwoman Imhof – Aye	Councilman Ziehm – Aye
Councilman Nichols – Aye	

Supervisor Trinkle made some comments. She stated she was advised to vote it down because the Plan was “tainted” due to the fact that no minutes of the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings were taken and the meeting dates of the Committee were not posted. She said she heard a lot of people say we need some sort of a Plan. It will be addressed again some time in the future. When the board is ready it will be put on the agenda for public knowledge.

Councilman Frank Ziehm said a lot of people told him that you (Town Board) should have used some parts of the plan and not rejected the whole thing. He hopes the new plan process will start soon. He said the Department of Ag & Markets offers a \$25,000 grant to towns developing a comprehensive plan. The grants will be available in August 2009. If we do a plan, we’re going to do it right this time. He suggested consulting a planner(s) who have assisted other towns as well as looking at plans from other towns.

William Buchanan asked why weren’t those people (the ones who favor the plan) here to speak for themselves rather than voicing their views through the Town Board.?

Francis Moon asked the board if it was possible to have a vote so every landowner can have a say?

But, he continued, if the majority are against the plan why are you pursuing it?

George Beagle commented that the towns people don’t want the plan. They don’t want to be told what they can do with their land.

Michael Halsey agreed it should be put to a public vote.

Nancy Mabeus stated you’re giving the town over to the federal government making it a welfare state!

Gloria Collery remarked that you (Town Board) have the legislative power to make what you need. Use that power to pass town ordinances. Towns that have comprehensive plans are disappointed with them.

Dan Thomas asked where is the pressure coming from to adopt a comprehensive plan? State? County?

He adamantly stated that development won’t come here.

Councilman Ziehm ended the discussion by saying let’s move on and can the plan. Public applause came forth.

New Business

William McCarty, Washington County Director of Real Property Tax Services, was present to discuss the veterans and senior exemptions.

Veterans Exemption – The town currently has 89 wartime veterans on the tax roll and grants this exemption to a maximum assessed value of \$80,000. NYS law allows a max assessed value of \$240,000. The county is going to raise it to \$200,000. One other town in the county is at the \$80,000 level and one town is lower. The rest are from the \$160,000 to \$240,000 range. Councilwoman Imhof would like it raised to \$180,000 since she feels the veterans in Cambridge have been shunned. The exemption is levied in \$20,000 increments.

Councilman Joel Nichols asked Mr. McCarty if he could run a report showing the tax dollar shift at every \$20,000 increment ranging from \$100,000 - \$180,000. Mr. McCarty agreed to produce the report for the December meeting. At the current \$80,000 level, \$4300 is shifted to other tax payers.

Cold War Veterans Exemptions – (1945-1991) At the present, the Town does not honor the Cold War Veterans Exemption. However, ten out of the seventeen towns in the county have adopted it as well as the county. Councilman Nichols remarked that we did not adopt it last year (the first year it was available) because we did not know the budget impact it would have. He recommended that the board wait for a report from Mr. McCarty as to how much the dollar amount will shift to other taxpayers. The board agreed.

Senior Citizens Exemption – Currently, the town's senior exemption for residents 65 and over is on a sliding scale of \$12,000(50%) - \$17,700 (20%). All towns in the county have adopted the exemption with various ranges. The county is a sliding scale of \$16,000 - \$24,400. The board wanted to see an impact report before making any decision to increase the exemption. They asked Mr. McCarty to prepare a report for the December meeting.

Fuel Bids

Councilman Frank Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Carol Imhof, to authorize Highway Superintendent Eric Shaw to advertise for bid the town's fuel supply for 2009.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Budget Transfers

Councilwoman Carol Imhof motioned, seconded by Councilman Joel Nichols, to transfer \$31.42 from Contingent A1990.0 to Justice Contractual A1110.4 to cover the cost of a bill submitted by Judge Armet.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Councilman Nichols motioned, seconded Councilman Ziehm, to transfer \$64.00 from Contingent A1990.0 to Comprehensive Planning Committee B8025.4 to cover the cost of printing copies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vote: 5 – Ayes 0 – Noes

Councilman Joel Nichols offered a suggestion that the town get a sign board to place out front of the Town Hall to keep the public informed about town meetings and other important topics.

Privilege of the Floor

Resident William Watkins commented he took the 2009 budget to some auditors in Albany and they commented that the town spends a lot of money for its small size. He questioned why the town needs 5 trucks, a loader, an excavator and two tractors to take care of 64 miles of road. Supervisor Trinkle stated that the roads are in good shape and the highway budget has no increase for 2009.

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County Report

Supervisor Trinkle commented that the County's tentative budget is currently at an 8% increase and departments are being asked to find more ways to cut.

A public hearing is scheduled for Friday, November 14 at the county building.

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

General #176 – 194	\$ 6,359.05
Highway #129 – 144	\$22,640.88

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally B. Eddy
Town Clerk