

JUNE 12, 2008
TOWN BOARD MEETING

The Stuyvesant Town Board held their monthly meeting on June 12, 2008 at the Town Hall at 7:00pm. In attendance at the meeting were Supervisor Valerie Bertram, Councilman Ronald Knott, Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer, Councilman Bradlee Webster, Councilman Edward Scott, Town Clerk Melissa Naegeli, Highway Superintendent Bernie Kowalski and Attorney for the Town Tal Rappleyea.

Supervisor Bertram called the Town Board Meeting to order at 7:05 pm and the meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Bertram asked for a motion to approve the previous month's minutes. A motion was made by Councilman Edward Scott, seconded by Councilman Bradlee Webster and voted on unanimously. The minutes were approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

Supervisor Bertram read the communications:

- ✧ A letter from Crawford & Associates Engineering, PC inviting everyone to a meeting being held the same day.
- ✧ A letter from LaFarge of North America inviting Supervisor Bertram to an Open House at their Ravenna Plant to review the process for mercury testing on the stacks. A question was raised if this was going to be a public meeting and Supervisor Bertram responded that the letter said it was an Open House for lawmakers. Supervisor Bertram reported that she had spoken with their Environmental Manager, John Regan who confirmed that they will come to a meeting at the Stuyvesant Town Hall in August to discuss the results of the testing. Assemblyman Gordon is trying to set up a date for a public meeting.
- ✧ A letter from the Town of Germantown regarding an Independence Day celebration being held on June 28th.

A motion to approve the communications as read was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster and was seconded by Councilwoman Edward Scott. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the bills was made by Councilman Edward Scott and seconded by Councilman Ronald Knott. The motion was carried unanimously.

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Jim Besha, President of Albany Engineering

Mr. Besha came to present an update on the Hydro Electric Plant in Stuyvesant Falls. Mr. Besha said the final transfer documents were signed on March 20th. The locks on the doors had to be drilled and they are currently cleaning out trash and taking inventory of what's there. They are working on inspections, studies and analysis to report to the Federal Government for permission to rehabilitate.

Crews will be working on clearing brush, the new signs are up and there will be a Federal Inspection at some point this summer. Mr. Besha reported that they hope to be "online" by this time next year.

Supervisor Bertram told Mr. Besha that a lot of residents are confused about what this means to the Town and asked him to explain what this will mean to residents, i.e., will the residents get their power from the new plant? Mr. Besha said that the power will be sold to National Grid but the Town will see benefits through taxes and fees coming into the Town. Supervisor Bertram expressed relief that the project is finally happening.

Mr. Besha said that now that they've cleared the regulatory hurdles the next step is to tackle the technology aspects. Mark Burch asked what capacity the plant will work at. Mr. Besha said that historically it was licensed for 330 kilowatts. When the license is up, Albany Engineering will apply for a relicense for 30-50 years for 7,000 kilowatts. The length of the license will depend on the amount of rehabilitation that is necessary. There was a question about the condition of the pen stocks and Mr. Besha said they are optimistic about their condition.

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Bruce Charbonneau, President of the Board of Directors for the Kinderhook Memorial Library

Mr. Charbonneau came to the meeting to let the Board and residents know that the Board of Directors for the Library has determined that there is a need for additional funding – an increase to \$20,000 or an increase from \$.09 to \$.12/1000. They are preparing a petition to the increase in the booths on election day this November and they will need 96 signatures from registered voters.

Mr. Charbonneau discussed the services provided by the Library to the Town. There are currently 329 active library card holders in the Town of Stuyvesant and 108 are expired.

Supervisor Bertram asked when the petition would be circulated. Mr. Charbonneau said they would be starting immediately because the petition had to be filed in the Town Clerk's Office by August 15th and has to be the Board of Election no later than 45 days prior to the General Election.

Both guests were thanked for their time and presentations to the Board.

REPORTS:

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk read her report and it's on file in the Town Clerk's Office. Melissa Naegeli also reported that the 2008 Taxes have been returned to the County and that 90% of the taxes had been collected.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Bernard Kowalski reported that the crews have finished paving. They were working with other towns and had jobs already scheduled when the prices began to soar. 72,000 gallons of liquid asphalt were used to upgrade the roads (almost 61,000 over last year).

The Highway Department will be cutting back slightly on their amount of mowing because of the price of gas.

There were residents from Gypsy Rock Development in attendance and had questions about how the paving schedules were determined. Superintendent Kowalski said that some roads have to wait for 10 years because of State funding requirements and it also depended on the types of surfacing used on the roads. The resident said they were having problems with their drainage because the road was elevated. Superintendent Kowalski said the road was not elevated and their drainage problems were most likely due to being at the bottom of a large hill.

A discussion began regarding the question of Town Easements over the properties in Gypsy Rock. Attorney for the Town Tal Rappleyea said that there were no documents found that showed easements were on file in the County Clerk's Office. The Town employees cannot go on to private property to even look at drainage questions without an easement. Mr. Rappleyea told the residents that they had two choices to try to remedy the problem in the development – they could either get together and fix the problems with the ditches themselves or they could grant the Town an Easement that would then be filed in the County Clerk's Office. Mr. Rappleyea suggested the residents contact their attorney if they have any additional questions on the procedures for these options.

Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector

Report is on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

Dog Control Officer

No report.

Planning & Zoning Boards

No report.

Greenway Committee

Councilman Ronald Knott reported that the Committee has voted unanimously to encourage the Town to hire the NYS Rural Water Association to complete a Groundwater Protection Plan. A planner from the NYS Greenway a Greenway meeting to be held on Thursday, July 17th. Due to the scheduling of that meeting, the June meeting will be cancelled.

The committee is also discussing a Wind Energy Ordinance. Currently, windmills would be limited in height according Local Law. They are looking at models of ordinances to accept windmills, i.e., setback requirements, etc. Getting a ZBA variance would be difficult because of the question of an alternate means of energy.

Councilman Ronald Knott had a model ordinance he would like the Board to review. Supervisor Bertram asked all the members to review the model and the discussion will be picked up at a later date.

Regarding the Ground Water Protection Plan, in protecting Agricultural Land it becomes difficult for building projects. Zoning Laws should consider ground water resources. A study could be done in Town and provided to the Planning Board and ZBA. This would be a \$5,000 project but would provide one more tool to the Town for planning. The Committee feels the Town should look at the process in the future and possibly budget for the study.

Agricultural Committee

No report. There was a question from the audience regarding a contact question being put on the website for the Agriculture Committee. Supervisor Bertram said she will check with Chairman Brian Chittenden to see if his phone number can be put on the website.

Town Hall Committee

Councilman Edward Scott reported that he power-washed the building. He said that next year we may want to rent a lift so the gable ends of the building can be cleaned. Councilman Scott also said that the trip on the building should be painted this year and he can do the work.

Councilman Scott reported that he has faxed the street light report to National Grid to get the lights fixed that are remaining on during the day.

Councilman Scott said he had been contact by several residents in Stuyvesant Falls regarding close calls on Route 9 near St. Mary's Church due to the site impairment because of over-growth on Charlie Foote's property . Councilman Scott said he will stop and speak with Mr. Foote about it.

Supervisor Bertram asked about the status of the 4th "Town of Stuyvesant" sign. Councilman Scott said we have the sign we just have to have a place to put it. Supervisor Bertram asked Superintendent Kowalski where the sign could be placed. He said that he thinks DOT will have to be involved since it will be on State Route 9J. Supervisor Bertram asked that DOT be contacted so the sign can be put up.

Councilman Ronald Knott reported that he had weeded some of the grounds around the Town Hall recently with his two grandsons and Melissa's son. He also reported that Garden Club had planted about 200 plants around the flagpole that had been donated by Ms. Jean Hewig. The Garden Club will take care thanking her since the plants were officially donated to them and they gave them to the Town. The Town Board expressed thanks and there was applause for the work done by the Garden Club.

Railroad Station Restoration Committee

Councilman Ronald Knott reported that the postcard show was held at the Railroad Station on June 6th and it went very well and was very interested. The Committee recommends that we invite the show back again at a later date.

The Farmers' Market is ongoing and doing well. On June 13th after the Market there will be a lecture on bird watching and there will be bird walk at the Ken Hummel Memorial Park on the morning of Saturday, June 14th.

We are currently waiting to hear from NYS DOT for the next phase of work to be done on the grant application for the Station Restoration.

Cemetery Committee

Councilman Bradlee Webster reported that the mowing has begun and that Town resident Andy Broockman has been hired to do it and has done a very nice job so far.

Councilman Webster has spoken with Mr. Roby regarding the fence. We are going to hold off and table the discussion until next year.

Councilman Webster reported that he has also spoken with Superintendent Kowalski regarding the stones that are knocked over. Superintendent Kowalski will go take a look and see if the work can be done by the Town or if someone will have to be hired to reset them. More information will be available at the next meeting.

Town Historian

In the absence of Juanita Knott, Supervisor Bertram reported that the Native American focus of Historic Stuyvesant Day will be a prelude to the Quadricentennial 2009 Celebration.

There has been a Quad '09 Committee meeting since the last Board meeting. Things are moving along nicely and there will be a 2-day event celebrating the Quadricentennial. There are a lot of ideas being considered for the weekend and fireworks are confirmed to close out the festivities. Supervisor Bertram has been in contact with the Town of Kinderhook representatives and Mrs. Knott is a member of the County Committee. If anyone has any suggestions or ideas about what could be done for that celebration let the committee know.

Supervisor Bertram reported that on this year's Historic Stuyvesant Day the Stuyvesant Fire Company will also hold an Open House to showcase the new truck recently purchased.

Melissa Naegeli reported that the 2nd Annual Ken Hummel 5K Race will also be held on Historic Stuyvesant. The kids' 1 mile run will begin at 8:30am and the 5K race will begin at 9:00am. She reported that over 600 registration forms were handed out at the Kinderhook OK 5K and they are also at the National Union Bank branches.

Karen Hummel reported that there will be a \$50 donation coming on behalf of non-runners. She was encouraged to come and walk.

Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer read a letter from Stuyvesant Falls resident Mr. Gibbs suggesting some Olympics-type activities for the kids be organized since it is also the opening weekend of the Olympics. The letter was passed on to Pat Casey to let the Historic Committee work with Mr. Gibbs.

Assessor's Office

Assessor's Clerk, Cathy Knott reported that Grievance Day was May 27th – there were 12 filed. Of those, 10 were lowered and 2 were unchanged.

The GAR process is going well. There will be a meeting with the State at the end of June.

There was a question if there would be any additional public meetings regarding the re-evaluation process. Mrs. Knott said there will be workshops scheduled in the Fall.

Recreation Committee

Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer reported that the recreation forms will be going home through the schools this week and will also be available in the Town Hall. The forms will need to go back to the Town of Kinderhook.

Flyers are out for the bird walk on Saturday to be followed by a trail build.

The official name of the Sharptown Road park is "Ken Hummel Memorial Park".

The next meeting will be held on June 21st at 11:00am at the Town Hall.

Other Reports

Mark Burch, our Town Representative to the County Environmental Management Council gave a report on their last meeting. Don Spencer of DEC was there and addressed the Council.

La Farge is conducting 3 weeks of stack testing. The Council is looking into mobil air quality monitoring. The equipment is currently in Cohoes but is slated to be moved in December. Mr. Burch said that based on so many requests, Columbia County will be given serious consideration for housing it next. The representatives from Germantown said that since Stuyvesant is in direct line with LaFarge and it's a larger problem they would back Stuyvesant getting the monitor.

Mr. DePew said he has been in contact with experts from SUNY and has asked them to come to Stuyvesant for presentation. Mr. Burch suggested that may be something for the Environmental Management Council.

The next Council meeting will be June 23 at 7:00pm at 401 State Street.

Old Business

Supervisor Bertram said that the Town of Kinderhook is looking for volunteers to sit on their Trails Committee – possibly someone from Stuyvesant Falls. Councilwoman Gumaer said that Michelle Richardson has expressed interest. Supervisor Bertram said she would get more details. The meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at Volunteer Park at 7:00pm.

Supervisor Bertram reported she and Councilman Knott met the with new DEC Region 4 Director – Betsy Blair and attorney Pete Ennis. They walked around Newtonhook and discussed the issues associated with closing Ferry Road. No one from DOT was at the meeting. Supervisor Bertram will try to set up a meeting with DOT to find out what the status is with the road closure.

Supervisor Bertram read a proposed resolution from the Nature Conservancy in support of an easement being granted on the Vincent Sacco property. A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Knott and seconded by Councilman Bradlee Webster. The motion was voted on and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster to approve a budget amendment of \$2,005.00 for the Highway Department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Knott. The motion was carried unanimously.

Supervisor Bertram reported that she had asked the Town Engineer for an estimate to replace the bridge on Schoolhouse Road. The estimate was \$2,827,760.00. These are preliminary numbers and the town will look into grants available and pursuing the option of CSX paying a portion. Supervisor Bertram has been in contact with lawmakers from other towns that also have CSX bridges and have asked them to gather information on the condition of their bridges.

Supervisor Bertram asked all Board members to attend the next Recreation Committee meeting so the grant application can be finished. A copy of the Town Engineers proposed estimate was provided to all Board members and they were asked to review for discussion at the Recreation meeting. The Town Engineer will be invited to attend as well.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster and seconded by Councilman Edward Scott. The motion was voted on and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.

Recorded this 12th Day of June 2008

Approved this 10th Day of July 2008

TOWN CLERK

SUPERVISOR

COUNCILPERSON

COUNCILPERSON

COUNCILPERSON

COUNCILPERSON

