

DECEMBER 29, 2008
TOWN BOARD MEETING

The Stuyvesant Town Board held their monthly meeting on December 29, 2008 at the Town Hall. In attendance at the meeting were Councilman Ronald Knott, Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer, Councilman Edward Scott, Councilman Bradlee Webster, Town Clerk Melissa Naegeli, Highway Superintendent Bernie Kowalski. Supervisor Valerie Bertram and Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea were not in attendance.

Deputy Supervisor Ronald Knott called the Town Board Meeting to order at 7:45 pm and the meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Knott explained to everyone that Supervisor Bertram wasn't able to be in attendance due to illness.

Deputy Supervisor Knott asked for a motion to approve the previous month's minutes. A motion was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster, seconded by Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer and voted on unanimously. The minutes were approved. Deputy Supervisor Knott also explained that Councilman Scott was running late but would be in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS

- ✧ A letter from Michelle Richardson questioning the budget process and timing of public hearings. Mr. Knott said this issue will be discussed at a future workshop meeting.
- ✧ A letter from the Hudson River Greenway inviting everyone to a meeting on January 14, 2009 regarding Endangered Architecture and One Site's Rescue. Councilman Knott said that he and Mrs. Charlene Leach are planning to attend.
- ✧ Letter from the Columbia County Leadership Program thanking for use of the building.
- ✧ A letter from Tom and Pat Caruthers (parents of Jeff & Lisanne Jensen) thanking the town for providing shelter during the recent ice storm and power outage, a donation was also included with the letter. Deputy Supervisor Knott reported that he has drafted a reply.

A motion was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster to accept the correspondence as read. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer and passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the bills was made by

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Town Historian Juanita Knott and Mrs. Patricia Casey made a special presentation to the members of the Board, Highway Superintendent Kowalski and Town Clerk Melissa Naegeli for all of their "extra duty work" during the recent power outage. The awards were a bottle of water with a piece of chocolate and a battery.

REPORTS

Town Clerk

Melissa Naegeli, Town Clerk said she is waiting for final, end-of-year numbers and her report is on file in her office. Mrs. Naegeli also report that she is working on getting the tax bills ready to be mailed.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Bernie Kowalski that he has purchased 2 used wings for plows at a recent NYS Thruway Auction for \$750 total. Mr. Kowalski also reported that brush from the recent ice storm can be dropped off at the designated area near the Ken Hummel Memorial Park – it will be burned at a later date.

Superintendent Kowalski said that it was an expensive December and that there were trees still down in the cemetery and playgrounds. Councilman Webster added that we will have to get bids for the work at the cemetery. Michelle Richardson said that garbage had been dumped down by the sandbar.

Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector

Gerry Ennis, Building Inspector and Zoning Enforcement Officer gave his reported that he is working on getting the old records on the computer. He also said that he will be attending school in March and will complete all the required hours at once.

Dog Control Officer

There was no report.

Planning & Zoning Boards

Planning & Zoning Secretary Shirley Narzynski reported that there was no Planning Board meeting in December. She also reported that the Zoning Board meeting scheduled for December 23rd was adjourned and will reconvene on December 30 at 7pm to discuss the information that had been presented by Mr. Boll.

Greenway Committee

Councilman Knott reported that there was a Public Information meeting held on November 20th regarding Agriculture and Economic Development. He also said that at the Committee's January meeting they will be compiling the information they've gotten from the 2 public information meetings and will discuss how to meet the goals. Councilman Knott said that he had spoken to the Greenway Director, Mark Castiglione regarding the Groundwater Study that had been discussed. There is a concern that recent State budget cuts will eliminate a lot of Greenway spending. Mr. Knott has contacted the NY Rural Waters Association to see if they had any other leads for funding for that project. The Columbia County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Committee are trying to get a countywide Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan passed. They have approached the Columbia County Board of Supervisors for funding to get the Plan going and they have asked if the Town of Stuyvesant would give them a letter of support. Mr. Knott read a proposed letter to the Town Board from the Greenway Committee asking for the Town's support of the Countywide Plan. Councilman Knott asked the Board if there was any objection to asking Supervisor Bertram to take the letter of support to the County Board of Supervisors. There were no objections.

Agricultural Committee

No report.

Town Hall Committee

Councilman Knott reported the generator worked great during the recent power outage and kept the town hall running as a shelter.

Railroad Station Restoration Committee

Marilyn Burch reported that there was a Holiday @ the Depot party held on December 20th (rescheduled from the 13th due to the ice storm). She said that although the party was lightly attended, the bake sale earned \$170. Mrs. Burch also reported that the committee had raised almost \$4000 for the year. The next committee meeting will be held January 17th at the 9am at the Town Hall.

Cemetery Committee

Councilman Bradlee Webster reported that we will have to get bids for the work to be done at the cemetery due the severity of the damage from the recent ice storm.

Town Historian

Mrs. Juanita Knott reported that the Columbia County Committee plans are coming along well. One of the ideas that the County Committee is putting forward an idea of a County quilt. Each town will design and make a quilt square to be included. Mrs. Knott said that there are ongoing discussions regarding an information kiosk and update to the "park" at the Stuyvesant Falls Overlook. She has met with Jim Besha and other representatives of Albany Engineering and they have agreed to not only provide the written history and pictures for the kiosk but to plan and build the project and to erect a new fence along the creekside of the park. The work should be completed by Historic Stuyvesant Day in August.

Assessor's Office

Cathy Knott, the Assessor's Clerk, reported that the Exemption forms have been mailed out and are due back by March 1.

Recreation Committee

Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer reported that the committee met on December 6th. She said that there is a flyer out for the "Full Moon Snowshoe Walk" being held on Saturday, January 10th at 7pm at the Ken Hummel Memorial Park. There will be a rental fee of about \$5.00 per pair and that the Recreation Committee would pay the difference. There will be a bonfire in the parking lot and warm refreshments. Councilwoman Gumaer also reported that there will be a Snowman Building Contest on Saturday, February 14th on the grounds of the Town Hall from 1pm – 3pm. If there isn't snow there will be a craft-making activity in the building. The next meeting will be held on January 3rd.

Councilwoman Gumaer also reported that there will be a meeting regarding hunting issues at the Ken Hummel Memorial Park on March 7th. She also said that the ice rink will be set up when the fallen tree is removed from the playground and that she has spoken with Highway Superintendent to have that taken care of. Highway Superintendent Kowalski added that there is a spot at the Ken Hummel Park that can be used for skating as well. He said they the Highway Dept. is cleaning out the wood that fell in the water and that it just has to freeze.

Councilwoman Gumaer said there has been no word on the grant or from Assemblyman Gordon regarding the \$5000 member item.

OTHER

Councilman Knott and Councilwoman Gumaer met with the candidates for the openings on the Planning and Zoning Boards. Councilman Knott made a motion to make the following appointments:

Planning Board: Frank Palladino (term ends 2010) and Sean Cummings (alternate)
Zoning Board: Amy Abatti (term ends 2011) and Paul Harpis (term ends 2009).

The motion was seconded by Councilman Edward Scott and was passed unanimously. Councilman Knott said there the alternate position for the Zoning Board was still vacant. There was a question from Lee Jameson regarding the letter of interest from Ned DePew. Councilman Knott said that Mr. DePew had declined that position.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Knott had given everyone a copy of a proposed Local Law to change the role of the alternate members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Knott explained that currently the alternate members of the Boards were only used in the event of a conflict-of-interest. This Local Law would enable the alternates to be utilized for other reasons, i.e., absence.

Public Hearings were scheduled as follows for January 8, 2009:

Srs. & Disabled Low Income Citizen Exemptions @ 6:15pm
Local Law regarding PB & ZBA Alternates @ 6:30pm
Fairpoint Contract @ 6:45pm

Councilman Knott said that one of the furnaces in the Highway Garage needed to be replaced. He said that because he thought it would be considered a repair he didn't think 3 bids to purchase were necessary but provided 2. The two estimates were for an exact replacement of the current furnace – it could be purchased wholesale and the employees of the Highway Dept. could do the work. He asked for approval to put aside \$3500 toward a new furnace. Due to questions regarding the 3 bid requirement Councilwoman Gumaer said that the Board would have to check with Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea. A motion was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster to set aside \$3500 toward the furnace replacement. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer and passed unanimously.

Councilman Knott asked for a motion to approve the Budget Transfer that was originally scheduled for a vote at the regular December meeting that had been cancelled. A motion was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster and seconded by Councilwoman Rosalind Gumaer. The motion was passed unanimously.

Councilman Knott read a letter of thanks to everyone who had volunteered and worked hard during the recent ice storm emergency.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lee Jameson said that people stopped in to visit at the shelter during the power outage.

Patricia Casey read a letter that she had written to the Editor of the newspapers thanking everyone for their work and help during the recent State of Emergency.

Councilman Bradlee Webster thanked the Fire Company and Michelle Richardson thanked the Stuyvesant Falls Fire Company

Cathy Knott told everyone that the beautiful holiday decorations in the town hall were provided by the Garden Club.

Michelle Richardson asked if the Town had an Emergency Plan. Councilman Knott said yes there is a plan and that a meeting will be scheduled to review that plan with the new members of the Board.

Marilyn Burch suggested that the Meals on Wheels Coordinator being contacted during an emergency to get a list of older residents who may need assistance. Andrew DiGiacomo suggested that there be a Health Care Professional on the Emergency Management team to do health checks.

Charlene Leach said “as a senior person” people called her and her husband to check on them. She also thanked Councilman Knott for going door-to-door with a generator that had been “donated” by Karen Hummel to help people for a little while at each house.

Jeff Jensen on behalf of him and his family, thanked the Board for opening the Town Hall as a shelter.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Bradlee Webster and seconded by Councilman Rosalind Gumaer. The motion was voted on and approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Recorded this 29th Day of December 2008

Approved this 8th Day of January 2009

TOWN CLERK

COUNCILPERSON

COUNCILPERSON

SUPERVISOR

COUNCILPERSON

COUNCILPERSON