

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
TOWN BOARD MEETING
February 12, 2009

The Town Board of the Town of Washington held its regular meeting on Thursday, February 12, 2009, at the Town Hall, 10 Reservoir Drive, Millbrook. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Florence Prisco with the following present:
Councilmen Stephen Turlates, Robert Audia and William Murphy, Town Clerk Mary Alex, Highway Superintendent James Brownell, Bookkeeper to the Supervisor Laura Hurley and Attorney for the Town John Gifford.

Also present were Recreation Director Warren McMillan, Steve Alex representing The Chazen Companies, Dr. Michael Klemens, David and Nan Greenwood, Frank Genova, Tim Marshall and Howard Schuman.

Supervisor Prisco opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Highway Superintendent Brownell reported that the dirt roads are in poor condition. The bottoms have dropped out of many of the roads in the last 24 hours and residents are being asked to travel the roads for necessity only. The Dutchess County Office of Emergency Response has been notified. If there is a 911 call for fire or rescue, a highway truck and loader will respond to ensure safe passage. The county and fire department have been made aware of trouble spots.

Supervisor Prisco thanked the Highway crews for the many hours they are spending addressing the issue. She is hopeful that the temperatures will drop and the roads will firm up.

County Legislator Fettes was unable to attend this evenings meeting.

David Greenwood, Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Commission introduced Dr. Michael Klemens to the Town Board. Dr. Klemens had met at an earlier date with the CAC to propose a project that would identify and evaluate vernal pools in the town. The project is supported by the Dutchess County Office of Planning and Development, with assistance from the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County and Millbrook Matters.

Dr. Klemens advised the Board that he is a scientist that joined the staff of the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in July, 2008. He is also an elected Planning Board member in Salisbury, CT, and understands the need to balance the environment with practical land use planning. His project is a community based scientific assessment of vernal pools in the Town of Washington. The study is designed to provide scientific research information to land use planners. Similar studies have been completed in Connecticut and Maine.

The goals of the study are:

- to verify that the vernal pools identified on the Hudsonia study are vernal pools
- to assess the quality of the vernal pools in an unbiased scientific manner
- to provide information to relevant town agencies as a layer and to aid in making land use applications.

The benefits of the study are:

- to provide field verified information, including the location and quality of the vernal pool
- allows the town to make decisions on in house data
- enable the town to make informed decisions on how and where to develop, thereby eliminating conflict and enhancing the town's home rule authority.

Dr. Klemens showed the Board that most of the vernal pools identified in the Hudsonia Study are located in the northwest quadrant of the town on the protected property of the IES. He showed a map that identified the study areas. The field study will be completed by citizen volunteers and field visits will take place in March and April. Property owners with identified vernal pools will be contacted by letter requesting permission to access their property. Volunteers will gather biological data and use digital camera to document and identify species found. Volunteers would complete a vernal pool assessment sheet. Additional work will be done in the office using GIS data and other relevant materials.

Dr. Klemens discussed obligate vernal pool species and facultative species. He showed a map of the identified vernal pools with the 100 foot buffer and the 750 critical upland habitats. The recommendation for development near a high quality vernal pool could be no development within the 100 foot buffer, although he did discuss 25% of a buffer area could be developed.

When completed the project would provide the town with an additional tool to help make informed decisions for land projects.

Steve Alex presented to the Town a refined sketch of the park expansion project. He identified the storm drainage sand filter area, the ADA compliant walking path, the oval parking entrance off of Route 44 with the parking area and an area for a small storage shed. Upon approval by the Town Board, The Chazen Companies will be submitting to the NYS DEC an application to permit the stream crossing linking the two parkland areas and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. These require DEC approval prior to work commencing at the site. Mr. Alex also presented the packet of information being sent to New York State Parks and Preservation for SHPO compliance. The Town Board reviewed the information presented and authorized the submittal to the respective agencies.

Mr. Alex presented the Town with Part 1 Environmental Assessment Form of the State Environmental Quality Review for review. If the town is comfortable with the document, he suggests that in March the town declare lead agency status, circulate the information accordingly and complete Part 2 and 3 of the EAF. Attorney Gifford agreed and would work with the town on this.

On a motion made by Councilman W. Murphy and seconded by Councilman Audia, the Board authorized the Town Clerk to advertise a Request for Proposals for the design and construction of a Timber Bridge to be constructed at the Town Park to link the park properties. All eyes were recorded.

In other business, the Planning Board had requested that the Board pass a resolution for a Surety Bond by Mr. Romeo for his project on Verbank Road.

RESOLUTION

Councilman Audia offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Councilman W. Murphy, who moved its adoption:

WHEREAS, Ron Romeo (“Romeo”) has made application to the Planning Board of the Town of Washington (the “Planning Board”) for approval for a subdivision of 138 +/- acres of property owned by Romeo on Verbank Road (the “Subdivision”); and

WHEREAS, part of the Subdivision plan calls for the construction of a Common Driveway and related improvements which will run from Verbank Road and access the lots in the Subdivision (the “Common Driveway”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to specifications approved by the Planning Board in connection with final subdivision approval, Romeo must construct a Common Driveway per the approved specifications in connection with the development of the Subdivision; and

WHEREAS, Romeo’s subdivision approval is subject to a condition that a Surety Bond (a/k/a “Performance Bond”) be given guaranteeing the proper construction of the Common Driveway in conformity with the specifications approved by the Planning Board and the conditions set forth in the Zoning Law; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the Surety Bond, \$5,000.00, is based upon the recommendation of the Town’s Planning Board Consultant, Neil Wilson, as an amount sufficient to protect the Town’s interest should Romeo fail to complete construction of the common driveway; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Surety Bond, annexed hereto as Exhibit “A”, has been approved as to form and manner of execution by the Town Attorney; and

WHEREAS, Town of Washington Land Subdivision Regulations provided that Surety Bonds (a/k/a “Performance Bonds”) shall be satisfactory to the Town Board as to form, sufficiency and manner of execution.

The foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote which resulted as follows:

Supervisor Prisco	Aye
Councilman Turletes	Aye
Councilman M. Murphy	Absent
Councilman Audia	Aye
Councilman W. Murphy	Aye

Recreation Director McMillan presented the Town Board with proposed By-Laws for the Recreation Commission. It incorporates the history of the recreation commission and provides defined structure to the organization. The financial portion incorporates recommendations from the audit and the town bookkeeper. The Board is asked to review the document and make any recommendations for changes.

In other recreation business, Mr. McMillan thanked Councilman Turletes for volunteering to be the liaison to the rec commission. He said the Rec Committee is looking at fee structures for the full calendar year and not the two brochure periods. This will be helpful to them at budget time. Plans for the summer programs are being reviewed with a sub-committee for the camp program. A new program has been added for the summer, a family kickball program. This is the first year that he has added a third session for the After School Program, and it will run through mid-April.

Mr. McMillan thanked Mayor Ciferri and the Village Highway Department for offering and cleaning out the remainder of the old bowling alley area. The Recreation Department is considering retrofitting the space as a fitness room for the community. Mayor Ciferri is also addressing some of the problems in the gymnasium such as heating problems, lighting concerns and insulation of the windows. Mr. McMillan appreciates the cooperation of Mayor Ciferri.

Mr. McMillan said that Nigel Pink has completed his term on the Rec Commission. Supervisor Prisco thanked Mr. Pink for his dedication and work in growing the youth soccer program from a declining program to a model program. Mr. Pink will continue to work with the recreational soccer program. There is now a vacancy on the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Genova suggested that the town recreation department team with the Wappinger Watershed Council for children's programs.

Mrs. Hurley presented the Town Board with year end recreation figures, revenue and expense reports for the month, cash reconciliation report and a budget adjustment report. She was pleased to advise the Board that the Transfer Station revenues had all been met or exceeded for 2008. The transfer station had \$35,863.79 over the anticipated revenue amount for the year.

Upon review of the financial operations, on a motion made by Councilman Audia and seconded by Councilman Turletes, the Board completed an Audit of the Supervisor's books and accepted the financial reports prepared by Mrs. Hurley for the Fiscal Year 2008. All ayes were recorded.

Mrs. Hurley advised the Board that the Assessor's Office will be sending the disclosure notices regarding assessments to all property owners in the town in the next several weeks. Assessor Tyger is preparing educational information to be included on the town website.

Supervisor Prisco announced that the continued Public Hearing on Local Law # ____ of 2009 regarding Wetlands and Watercourse Protection remains opened if anyone wished to make comments. The Wetlands Committee has a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00 PM.

Planning Board Chairman Beaumont said that the Planning Board will hold off on comments until after the meeting on the 18th.

Supervisor Prisco announced that the Millbrook Round Table has ceased publication. Shortly after the employees were notified, reporter Janine Stankus advised Supervisor Prisco of the closing. Supervisor Prisco said the loss of the local weekly newspaper will be missed by the town. It is one of the best sources of information for local residents. Town Clerk Alex advised that the Town will continue to use the Poughkeepsie Journal for publication of legal notices.

Supervisor Prisco said that there is a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review. Councilman Turletes made a motion to appoint Diane Parker to the Board of Assessment Review. Councilman Audia abstained from voting as Mrs. Parker has been a longtime customer of his.

Supervisor Prisco congratulated Kirsten Gillibrand on her appointment to the United States Senate by Gov. Paterson. She will be missed as our congressional representative.

Supervisor Prisco, along with Mayor Ciferri, attended a workshop hosted by Assemblyman Molinaro regarding the state budget. It appears that the state will be facing some very hard times and it is uncertain what state funding will be available for municipalities.

Supervisor Prisco and Mayor Ciferri also attended a summit hosted by Gov. Paterson and then Congresswoman Gillibrand on the future of the Hudson Valley. It focused on energy and green initiatives.

The theme of items to be collected for the Food for Folks food pantry for February is shaving supplies.

On a motion made by Councilman Audia and seconded by Councilman Turletes the minutes from January 5 and January 8, 2009 were accepted as presented. All ayes were recorded.

Town Clerk Alex reported that as of January 31st, 28% of the taxes had been collected. A payment in the amount of \$709,525.93 was made to the Supervisor. Monthly reports were submitted to the Supervisor and filed with the Town Clerk from the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Recreation Director, Building and Zoning Administrator and Justice Court.

Mrs. Alex reported that she had coordinated and attended a meeting with Supervisor Prisco, Highway Superintendent Brownell, Mrs. Hurley and Mr. McMillan with DeForest Howland and Rose Fowler from Marshall and Sterling Insurance to review the town's current policy, answer specific questions and prepare the insurance application for the upcoming year. They also met with Mr. Howland and Esther Aponte to review various health benefit plans for town employees. Ms. Aponte had rates from various companies including MVP, the current provider to the town. Upon review, the rates for the current MVP EPO plan were within the budget and provided the same coverage to employees. On a motion made by Councilman Turletes and seconded by Councilman Audia the Board moved to continue to provide health benefits to employees through MVP Health Plan. All ayes were recorded.

Councilman Audia advised the Board that he has met with Lou Spagnola to discuss the potential longevity of the furnace in the town hall. There have been some recent circulator problems with the unit. Mr. Spagnola suggested that the town budget funds in the 2010 to replace the furnace.

On a motion made by Councilman Audia and seconded by Councilman W. Murphy the following claims were accepted as presented:

Gen Fund A	\$17,268.58
Gen Fund B	\$4,379.78
Youth Rec Fund	\$4,379.78
Highway Fund DB	\$115,180.55
Parkland Fund H	\$5,568.75
Equip Reserve R	\$6,695.00
PB Escrow TA	\$1,207.50

TOTAL	\$150,812.05
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All ayes were recorded.

On a motion made by Councilman Turletes and seconded by Councilman W. Murphy the Board appointed Diane Parker to a five year term on the Board of Assessment Review. Councilman Audia abstained. All other ayes were recorded.

There being no other business, on a motion made by Councilman Turletes and seconded by Councilman Audia the meeting was closed at 11:00 PM. All ayes were recorded.

Mary Alex, Town Clerk