

Town Board Meeting
November 8, 2010

At the Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 8th day of November 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: Deputy Town Clerk Melissa Stannard, Town Justice Janet DeCarlo, David DeCarlo, Dick Battistoni, Rani Bass, Henry Peabody, Meghan Wilkins, Terry Hamilton, Astrid Davis

Supervisor Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and immediately led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Resolution #117

Councilman Ziehm motioned, Seconded by Councilwoman Fedler to approve the minutes of the October 11 Regular Meeting with no amendments.

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Supervisor's Report

Councilman Davis asked if all the bills are in for the Bridge Project. Supervisor Watkins reported that they were.

Resolution #118

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

Vote: Ayes – 5 Noes – 0

Town Board

Councilman Berndt reported from the High Speed Internet Committee. Councilman stated he spoke with Mr. Dwyer and Verizon has not earmarked any funds for this project.

Supervisor Watkins spoke with Sam Caldwell who said he is still pushing to get internet into this town. The engineer is still pushing for this project also. When the funds become available the Town should be eligible for High Speed Internet.

Councilman Berndt received a flyer at one of the budget workshops from the North East Recycle Council. Town residents of the Greenwich Citizens Committee are looking for a letter of support for composting and handling organics in small towns.

Councilwoman Fedler spoke with Athena Bradley who stated they have abandoned this project for now but will be looking at it again in the future, maybe a year or so. It was a grant writing group and they have decided not to write any grants for this project at this time.

Councilman Berndt reported there was an article in the Association of Towns Magazine about the New York Power Authority Solar Initiative.

Supervisor Watkins stated there was not enough growth space or acreage available at the Town Hall / Town Garage. There is a concern that it would be the responsibility of the people for 20 years.

Councilman Berndt stated there are some other options, the town owned parcel on Vly Summit Road and the parcel on Burch Lane. It is a concern for a south face view.

Councilman Berndt asked if the 24 acre facility in Jackson jointly owned between Town of Cambridge, Town of White Creek and Town of Jackson could be a possibility.

Supervisor Watkins stated this could be a possibility because all the transmission lines are already there and that is what they are looking for. Supervisor Watkins will speak with Supervisors Shay and Brown to see what they want to do.

Councilman Berndt stated that the square footage is there, maybe even the Village of Cambridge and Salem could participate. He was wondering if anybody has been as innovative enough to put solar pv on top of a former dump. The methane gas and tubes sticking out of the ground would be an obstacle. Testing continues every year.

Town Clerk

The Local Dog Law was received back from Town Attorney Alan Wrigley. The public hearing has been set for the next Town Board Meeting 12/13/10.

Deputy Town Clerk Melissa Stannard reported that she and Sally Beelen-Eddy would be going to the Tax Collecting Course at the County Office on 11/17/10 from 2-4PM. There will be a sign placed on the Town Hall stating the office will be closed that afternoon.

She also reported the new dog tags have been received. Deputy TC reported receiving Animal Control report, there were no calls resulting in charges to the Town for the month of October.

Resolution #119

Councilman Davis motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ziehm to transfer money. The amount of \$100.00 was transferred from A3520.4 Contractual Control of other Animals to A3510.4 Contractual Dog Control. The amount of \$100.00 from A1990.4 Contingent to A1110.4 Contractual Justice Control.

Vote: Ayes – 5

Noes: - 0

Resolution #120

Supervisor Watkins motioned, Seconded by Councilman Davis to approve the minutes of the October 25th Special Meeting/Budget Public Hearing.

Vote: Ayes – 5

Noes: - 0

Planning Board

There was no report from the Planning Board this month. Councilman Berndt pointed out that this is the second maybe third month there has been no report. Supervisor Watkins stated he would contact Chairman Eric Pearson and have him attend next month's meeting to give a report.

Superintendent of Highways

Resolution #121

Councilman Ziehm motioned, seconded by Councilman Davis, to authorize Superintendent Shaw to advertise for bid the town's 2011 fuel supply.

Vote: Ayes – 5

Noes: - 0

Supervisor Watkins stated that Superintendent Shaw would be purchasing gas from the Village Highway Department through their State Contract. All the tractors use on road diesel, the town doesn't pay tax on it.

Superintendent Shaw saved \$10,000 in purchasing the stone dust this fall.

Councilman Berndt asked what the plans were for capital purchases through 2011 and 2012. Supervisor Watkins stated there was nothing planned for 2011 but the tractor and mower were due to be replaced in 2012.

Councilwoman Fedler read Superintendent Shaw's monthly report. We replaced culverts where needed. Drew gravel on roads where needed. Holes on the hard tops were patched. Plow equipment was readied for winter. The loader was repaired at a cost of \$5,908.25. That brings the total for 2010 to \$11,216.83. When I suggested buying a new loader two years ago we had been offered \$47,000 for our old loader. Now it is not worth a fraction of that. We have \$5,476.71 in repairs for the mowing tractor which has 8,500 hours on it.

Code Enforcement

Supervisor Watkins reported LaVerne Davis received certificate from electrical inspector and the CO was issued for English's trailer. There is a two car garage being built on Edie Road. There is a new house construction on King Road.

Councilman Ziehm gave a copy of the Agricultural Law Exemption to Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt to keep on file. LaVerne Davis has one on file from a few years ago. Councilman Berndt asked if the Town Board could receive a Code Enforcement Report and dates of the English Road inspections.

Assessor's Report

Supervisor Watkins reported Jeffrey Jackson is keeping things up to date. Assessor Jackson has at least one town resident visiting during his weekly office hours.

Town Justice

Judge Janet DeCarlo was able to get the Police Report from BCI investigator Thomas Aiken dated March 16, 2010 of the incident on that date. Judge DeCarlo proceeded to read the police report.

Judge DeCarlo reported the court administration received a new computer. All the passwords on all the electronics have been changed on everything in the court system to ensure all is more secure. A new file cabinet was purchased to keep paper work more secure. The JCAP grant has been sent, there were bids from 2 contractors and another that was late but sent anyway.

Unfinished Business

Town Justice Consolidation

Councilwoman Fedler has been doing research on the consolidated court system. Her research showed that all budgeted expenses for the court system would stay the same no matter where the court was held, including security, salaries, mandated education, computer program and maintenance. The only thing that could change is the supply budget. In order to become a consolidated court the town would have to independently hire people for 20% of the voters signature on a petition. This has to be done by every town to be included in the consolidation. This has to be hired and could cost the town several thousand dollars. The consolidation can not be done until the term of the current justice is up. The efficiency of doing this is less than 3% of the courts budget is saved and is not cost effective.

Councilman Berndt thanked Councilwoman Fedler for all of her research. Councilman Berndt talked with Supervisor Shay from the Town of White Creek whom is interested in looking at the brochure. Councilman Berndt would like to continue to pursue this to see what the comptrollers office and OCA have to say. The Town of Jackson Supervisor Brown didn't indicate whether they were looking into it or not. Councilman Berndt questioned the need for an outside firm for petitioning.

Judge DeCarlo stated that all was accurate as she had been told. OCA doesn't want to be involved because it is too time consuming and cost prohibitive. The petition takers would have to be hired so there would be no influence.

Councilman Berndt spoke with Mr. Riley and this is set up for low volume courts who only handle a couple of cases per year. Councilman Berndt would like to look as case studies where this has actually occurred with cost savings. This has been done with the Tug Hill commission and Councilman Berndt would like to see if it is working for them. Supervisor Watkins asked who the Town of Cambridge would consolidate with.

Councilman Berndt responded the Towns of White Creek and Jackson. The justice budget is 1.2 % of our budget. With shared services there would likely be a building charge.

Councilman Zeihm stated it doesn't hurt to continue to look at the options. It will give an opportunity to think about it.

Supervisor Watkins mentioned again if other towns do not want to participate it is a dead issue.

Article 78

Nothing to report.

New Business

The budget was passed with a 1% increase. Decided it was a good budget. The budget can be signed, sealed and sent to the County.

County Report

There is a bus load of town residents going to the county meeting in response to the potential closing of the Transfer Stations. Supervisor Watkins asked the Town Board their opinion on closing the Transfer Stations. The transfer stations consist of 5 throughout the county and account for 4-5% of the county budget. If they should close; what would people do with their garbage, what about recycling? The county will be relying on commercial haulers. The transfer stations are what affects most people. The last few years the county has been cutting the maintenance and repairs of the transfer stations as if dooming them to fail. Councilman Davis asked what it would take to make them run more efficient? The price of stickers was raised and we are selling more than ever. The transfer station workers are very helpful, but they need to be audited. Could the county look at volunteer help or alternative sentencing.

Councilwoman Fedler stated this would be very difficult for the smaller haulers and contractors if the transfer stations were to close. The \$4 million budget includes the burn plant. There are \$1 million income from stickers and \$250,000 in recycling.

Privilege of the Floor

Councilwoman Fedler asked that the board would not conduct business on a Saturday or Sunday unless there was a State of Emergency. Supervisor Watkins stated he is open 24/7.

There being no further business before the Board, Councilman Davis motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Fedler, carried by all to adjourn the meeting at 8:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Q. Stannard
Deputy Town Clerk