

Minutes of Germantown Town Board meeting, held December 15, 2008 at the Germantown Town Hall, commencing at 7:00pm.

Present: Roy Brown, Supervisor
Joan Snyder, Councilwoman
Graceann Lamberta, Councilwoman
Joel Craig, Councilman
Jeremy Smith, Councilman

Recorded by: Charlene Diehl, Town Clerk

Supervisor Brown called the meeting to order and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Councilwoman Snyder made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous month; Councilwoman Lamberta seconded the motion, with all in favor and none opposed.

Councilwoman Lamberta made a motion to accept the audited bills; Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilwoman Snyder: Aye
Councilman Craig: Aye

Communications – Town Clerk

A thank you from James Schneider for the town board's assistance in enabling him to complete his Eagle Scout project - raised platforms.

Department Communications

Highway – read by Rich Jennings

- board specs given for the new truck; has a hold on 2008 price and wants the board to move ahead with the authorization to purchase;
- dealt with damage from the December 8th minor power outage;
- cleaning leaves out of ditches;
- new key system is online at the garage and will make billing easier, especially after the last storm, which may be eligible for FEMA reimbursement.

Mr. Jennings informed the board the truck he wants the town to buy is a 2009, will take four months to deliver, and can be purchased at the county's 2008 bid spec price.

A motion to approve the purchase of the highway truck at the county's 2008 spec was made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Smith.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilwoman Lamberta: Aye
Councilman Craig: Aye

Sewer

- moved portable generator to keep pumps running and helped out residents;
- met with engineer at the site, and plans for the repair/replacement of valves at Pump Station #2 are being drawn at this time;
- received proposed design work regarding a new sewer hookup and forwarded it to the engineer for his review;
- both pump stations and the main plant were kept in operation during the last storm, with no down time;
- average daily gallons: 42,800

Police – read by Roger Rekow

- 172.5 hours logged for the month of November;
- new police vehicle has arrived – SUV up and running;
- both Police and Fire departments were out assisting during the past storms

Parks – Supervisor Brown reported that Mike George was unable to give an update as he was taking a shift at the warming shelter, to assist in the storm.

Economic

- Art Space opened December 5th;
- The current show runs through December 21st and gifts are available;
- New ideas are being sought for features and presentations

Sidewalk – read by Roy Brown

- committee met with residents living adjacent to the sidewalk to explain potential property disturbances and what will occur;
- more meetings with property owners are anticipated;
- a general information meeting will be scheduled for all town residents;
- meeting information will be posted on the website once scheduled

Re-Zoning – read by Joel Craig

Mr. Craig reported there was no meeting in the previous month, but the committee had sent a recommendation to the town board suggesting Troy River Street Planning & Design to assist in the process.

Motion to enter into an agreement with Troy River Street Planning & Design made by Councilman Craig and was seconded by Councilman Smith.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilwoman Snyder: Nay
Councilwoman Lamberta: Recused herself

After confirming the passage of the motion, Supervisor Brown said that Troy River Street will negotiate the contract as well, and Councilman Craig said they will also assist in obtaining grants to help with the costs.

Old Business

Energy Audit

The Energy Audit document is currently being passed around to the board members and Supervisor Brown would like to meet with the board to discuss what direction the town should take.

New Business

- Round table discussion will be scheduled for January 8th, with some topics being the energy audit and communication ideas;
- Councilman Craig inquired from Supervisor Brown if Assemblyman Lopez could schedule another meeting with residents to discuss what's currently going on, especially in light of the fiscal crisis

The Town Clerk opened the one bid received for the purchase of the town's 1984 International Dump Truck: the winning bid went to Calvetta Auto Sales, for \$1,651.00.

Motion to approve the sale of the town's 1984 International Dump Truck, as is, to Calvetta Auto Sales, for \$1,651.00 made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilwoman Lamberta.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilman Craig: Aye
Councilman Smith: Aye

Supervisor's Report

- A Winter Stroll and tree lighting ceremony was held on December 17th, with special thanks to the Police and Fire departments and all the Park volunteers. A round of applause goes to Mike George and Liz Bathrick for pulling the successful event together. There is talk about holding the event next year as well.

Councilman Smith wanted to report to the board that the meeting for the Parks commission was very disappointing, primarily due to the lack of attendance, and that Mike George has very little help to implement any of the ideas and plans for the park. Mr. Smith has talked to the Weiner family and reports that the town can use the \$50,000 for securing matching grants or funding for the parks, and suggests discussing how to energize the Parks commission be added to the round table meeting.

Councilwoman Lamberta said lack of volunteers is an ongoing problem. Mike George commended Austin Sullivan, Rich Jennings, Liz Bathrick and the highway staff as responsible for the success of the Winter Stroll. He suggested that perhaps other organizations can be contacted about helping out in park activities.

- The new 2009 police car is here and will be in service shortly, once the striping and plating have occurred.

- Otto's Market opened on December 3rd. The prices are affordable and Otto is approachable and residents need to shop there to keep the business in town. He is open seven days a week.
- Janet Crawford will become the new secretary for the Planning and Zoning boards. She will be meeting with both chairs this coming month.
- Highway crew and town employees are to be commended for clearing trees, diverting traffic and assisting with the storm the county is currently experiencing. The Fire Company has been assisting as well and there are plans for the highway crew to assist the town of Livingston with their clean up.

Councilman Smith announced that a contribution from an anonymous donor is allowing the town to keep the Parsonage open during the winter.

Councilwoman Snyder urges folks to stop in at Otto's and thank him, as she took a car load of bread, milk and yogurt donated by Otto to the Taghkanic Fire House, where a shelter has been set up for those without power.

Supervisor Brown reported that a State of Emergency had been declared for Columbia County on the previous Friday morning, and that the town highway crew and the fire department did a fabulous job of assisting. He said that the county and state had a meeting that day regarding the storm and that crews were being made available to come in and assist. As of the time of the board meeting, half of Columbia County was still without power. The warming shelter at the Activities Building had opened Friday (12/12) at noon. Mr. Brown thanked the volunteers for staffing the warming shelter, among them Anthony Cidras, Allen Schuenhoff, Jerry Smith, Joan Snyder, Graceann Lamberta, Joel Craig, Austin Sullivan and Roger Proper. The warming shelter was being kept staffed until Thursday (12/18) and anyone interested in volunteering should contact Supervisor Brown.

Mr. Brown reported that he received permission from Columbia County Homeland Security to utilize two of their generators: one was used at Palatine Manor and the other by the Fire Company to assist residents in need.

Mr. Brown indicated he has had ongoing meetings with National Grid about the power outages and that he passes the information along to the Highway and Fire departments. Senator Saland's office has been in contact with the Supervisor to see if any assistance from his office is needed.

Councilwoman Snyder thanked Supervisor Brown for all the assistance he has contributed during this storm.

Open to the Floor

Ellen Epstein put in a plea for Supervisor Brown to recommend the county get GIS capacity. Mr. Brown said that George Sharpe had done a proposal a few years back and approached the county and the county is moving forward with the GIS.

Bill Muirhead thanked Rich Jennings, the members of the town board and the First Responders for a great job of working together during the storm. He has a sense of pride in his community and 'hats off to all'. He also said the town has to look for volunteers, be aggressive about it, and look for projects that will be worthy of the Parks Commission.

Faythe Smith said she is grateful to live in a community like Germantown. She had to call Rich Jennings three times to have her basement pumped out and he and his crew went above and beyond; she is very appreciative and impressed.

Roger Rekow advocated that care be taken when planning the update of the playground. He said that the playground equipment was a memorial donation and that it should be modified to meet the safety standards, not necessarily discarded for new equipment.

Upcoming Meetings

December 30th at 11:00am – End of Year Town Board meeting

January 5th at 6:00pm – Re-Organizational meeting

January 8th at 7:00pm – Round Table Town Board workshop/discussion

January 20th at 7:00pm – Town Board meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Councilwoman Lamberta and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder; all in favor and none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,