

Department Updates

Highway Department - reported by Richard Jennings

- cab and chassis for the new truck is in ahead of schedule and will be going to Zwack's;
- crew cleaning up from December's ice storm damage;
- crew is sweeping and picking up sand left on the roads from the storms;
- Rich met with FEMA on reimbursement from the December storm damage;
- docks at Cheviot and the Anchorage being prepared for installation next month

Bond Resolution is needed authorizing the acquisition of one highway truck w/plow and issuance of serial bonds of the Town of Germantown, Columbia County, New York, in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$210,000 pursuant to the local finance law to finance the costs thereof and delegating certain powers in connection therewith to the Town Supervisor.

Motion to approve a bond resolution, not to exceed \$210,000, to pay for the new Highway truck made by Councilman Craig and seconded by Councilman Smith. The bond will be spread over five years and the funds will come from the Highway Department.

Supervisor Brown: Aye

Councilwoman Snyder: Aye

Councilman Lamberta: Aye

Sewer - reported by George Sharpe Jr.

- average daily flow - 37,000 gallons;
- 2 spare pumps and blower are back from being repaired;
- there was a problem with a grinder pump; the alarm was adjusted and it's now working;
- still working with the engineer on one new hook-up;
- there is another potential hook-up, although George hasn't met with them yet

George let the board know the generators were serviced and one stationary generator has a leak in the gear box – repair estimate is \$3,390.12, and includes a tune-up, labor and travel time. The generator will have to be offline for about 20 hours and George is working on a back-up plan for continuing operations while the generator is offline.

Supervisor Brown reiterated that a back-up plan has to be in place to keep the plant running, and needs to see a plan of action before any approval can be secured.

A motion for tentative approval of the generator repair, subject to Supervisor Brown and Councilman Craig's oversight and advice to move forward, was made by Supervisor Brown and seconded by Councilman Craig.

Councilwoman Snyder: Aye

Councilwoman Lamberta: Aye

Councilman Smith: Aye

Maintenance - reported by Anthony Cidras

- rest rooms in the Town Hall were painted; the offices of the Supervisor and the Town Clerk will be painted once colors have been picked;
- Activity Building and Snack bar have been cleaned up;
- cleaning of the park trails has begun;
- mowers were tuned up;
- rake and bucket were installed on the tractor;
- salvage company coming in to pick up refuse on Saturday;
- wood permit policy draft was given to council members;
- Main Care was called to set up an appointment for the boilers to be serviced.

Supervisor Brown asked Anthony to hold off on the boiler servicing as the NYSERDA Energy audit came back and funding may be available to help. He will advise Anthony when he hears more about it, since the audit recommends replacing some boilers.

Mr. Cidras reminded the board that his DEC Water Treatment training class is from the 23rd –30th, and to leave a message if you need to contact him. Supervisor Brown thanked Anthony for stepping up to do the lake maintenance by taking this class and becoming certified.

Councilman Smith stated his appreciation to Anthony for drafting a wood permit policy and stated for the record that this policy came from the number of complaints that live trees in the park were being cut. Mr. Smith recommends that someone go through the park and make a determination of what trees should be cut.

Councilman Craig suggested that the town attorney review the draft before anyone votes on it, and Councilwoman Lamberta recommended checking with Mr. Fingar on the town's liability responsibility.

Councilwoman Snyder thanked Anthony for doing a great job of cleaning up the Snack Bar and the Activity Building.

Police Department –

No report available

Economic Development - reported by Roy Brown

Supervisor Brown reported that the committee met last week and they are working on some initiatives. Corinne Curry and Bruce Bohnsack will be discussing some of the initiatives with business owners before reporting back.

Emergency Preparedness - reported by Joel Craig

- Red Cross shelters don't allow pets so a local vet has agreed to work with the town on keeping pets during an emergency;
- A needs list is being worked on

Supervisor Brown reported that Wes Lorenz has created a video on Disaster Preparedness and what folks should do in an emergency and it will be played on the Valstar channel.

Re-Zoning Committee - Reported by Joel Craig

- Joel and the consultant toured the town on February 20th so the consultant could get a 'lay of the land';
- April 13th at 6:00pm is the next meeting.
- A public forum is scheduled for May 11th to discuss what the committee is doing; a follow-up session on the weekend is a possibility for those who cannot attend the meeting during the week;

300/400 Anniversary – reported by Jerry Smith

- planning for entertainment when the Halve Moon comes up the river;
- two state-funded projects are underway: library books in a display cabinet at the library, and a plaque at the Anchorage;
- 2010 is the 300th anniversary and tri-centennial of Germantown and a genealogical seminar is scheduled as well as a play at the school who will also be having art and essay contests;
- hoping to have a local composer commission a piece of music for the Palatines;

- oral history of some Germantown residents is about to get underway, and the plan is to produce a DVD of the best interviews to sell;
- plans to design and build a sculpture for the town are also in the works and is likely to involve summer program attendees;
- cataloguing History Department possessions, restoring and digitizing the valuable documents in possession of local churches. The long-term plan is to have a new web site devoted to the Germantown Palatine story.

Supervisor Brown said the County Tourism Department has funds to give to local organizations but a new application needs to be submitted. Mr. Brown also recommends that Austin Sullivan apply on the town's behalf for fireworks or parks monies, as some was received last year.

Sidewalks

Supervisor Brown said a meeting on the sidewalks is scheduled for the following week with the new engineer at Foyt Albert. The project is almost ready to go to full design and that monies are still available. Another information meeting will be held and the dates will be posted on the web site.

Old Business

Local Law #3 of 2009: Cold War Veterans Exemption – A local law to provide for an exemption from real property taxes for real property owners by veterans who rendered military service to the United States during the “Cold War - a period of September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991”.

Motion to pass Local Law on Cold War Veterans Exemption made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilwoman Lamberta.

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

Councilwoman Snyder gathered an estimate for the Garden Club proposal presented last month and indicated it would cost no more than \$225.00. The town has a good quality of mulch to be used, and members will donate plantings from their own garden, which will help contain costs. The club will need to know what was planted last year and will also be taking pictures of the rock garden by the lake to see what's growing and what should be removed. The club will work on the raised beds by the beach house and town hall as well. Mrs. Snyder indicated there are funds in the budget for this proposal and recommends moving forward.

Motion to accept the Garden Club proposal for park beautification made by Councilwoman Lamberta and seconded by Councilman Smith.

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

Anthony Cidras said he had spoken with Al McDonald and the Eagle Scouts may be able to incorporate the rock garden into their project, which would save the town some money. He let the board know he has extra 6x6s to replace the current ones.

Supervisor Brown informed the audience that a member item grant had been received from Senator Saland's office for a new police car, and the board needs a proposal to pay for the police car from the General Fund in order to recoup monies from the member item grant.

Councilman Smith verified with Supervisor Brown that the town will receive the money from the state and wondered if it was in the queue. Supervisor Brown said he had spoken with Senator Saland and though the funds are currently frozen, the town should move ahead with the process to purchase the vehicle and submit the paperwork for reimbursement.

Motion to approve purchase of the police car from the General Fund was made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Craig.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilwoman Lamberta: Aye
Councilman Smith: Aye

Councilman Craig thanked Ellen Epstein for her service as the Chair of the Planning Board over the past year.

New Business

Supervisor Brown said on April 2nd there would be a Public Information Update Session on the Sewer District. Councilman Smith said he wants to get the word out to those impacted in the sewer district that they should attend the meeting.

Councilwoman Snyder spoke on the Public Works and Highway Committee regarding sewer reduction requests. She said the town board has the right to change the sewer rents and that reduction requests were sent out with the January bills. 12 requests were received, and she responded to all of them and answered any questions raised to her. She indicated that two rents to be reduced needed the approval of the town board.

Motion to reduce sewer rents on two residents, based on information provided and with the understanding that when the residences are occupied again the rates will resume to their previous level, made by Supervisor Brown and seconded by Councilman Smith.

Councilwoman Snyder: Aye Councilwoman Lamberta: Aye
Councilman Craig: Aye

Councilman Craig said there is not a lot of leeway for the board to make reductions, there are certain circumstances that apply, and he thanked Councilwoman Snyder for responding personally to everyone who submitted reduction requests.

Councilwoman Snyder said that discussion about a Park Chairman needed to occur; as Michael George was the Chair last year she would like to see him continue in the role this year and wanted the board to approve him.

Motion to appoint Michael George as Park Commission Chair made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Smith.

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

Rich Jennings let the audience know that the Roadside cleanup would be held on April 22nd with a rain date of the 23rd and he is looking for volunteers, as there is a lot of debris along the roads this year.

Supervisor Brown mentioned that he and another supervisor are bringing up the issue of roadside debris in the county at the Public Works/Solid Waste Committee meeting next week, and perhaps a crackdown on trash carriers should be undertaken, as that is a growing area of concern.

Supervisor's Reports

- school budget hearing was held recently at Columbia Greene Community College and there was a great exchange of questions. Supervisor Brown thinks the school board did a great job under the circumstances and thanked them for being proactive. A PowerPoint handout is available in the Town Clerk's office and at the school. Mr. Brown indicated he will be reviewing the town budget again and may be considering cutting a full-time position from the town.
- There were a series of break-ins at town businesses a few weeks ago and the Sheriff's Office is investigating and looking at damage and assessments. There were no home invasions and if there were he would alert the community immediately. Councilman Craig said if any residents see anything suspicious to contact the police.

- \$500 from National Grid was received for the use of the Activity Building during the snow and ice storms in December;
- although the town was not originally approved for FEMA reimbursement for time, labor and trucks used during the state of emergency, a letter was sent to the Governor and money will be forthcoming;
- Last week the County Board of Supervisors approved the decision to move Social Services to the Ockawamick building. It was a controversial process and alternatives were sought but a discussion of Plan B led to no answer on costs. A satellite office will be located in the City of Hudson for those who can't travel outside the city and engineers will be working with departments moving into the building to ensure the move is done correctly.
- The District Attorney's office will move to the former OFA and other departments will move as space becomes available.

Councilman Smith wanted to let the audience know the Commission on Aging who coordinates Meals on Wheels is always short of volunteers and if anyone in town could volunteer it would be most appreciated. Supervisor Brown will be going around with the Meals on Wheels folks to get a better understanding of the program so he can take that information back to the county. Councilwoman Lamberta indicated her desire to participate in the excursion as well.

Councilman Craig reported back to the board on the Hudson Valley Municipal Purchasing Group and recommends the town join. Nothing precludes the town from buying local and local businesses can join as well to benefit.

Motion for the Town of Germantown to join the Hudson Valley Municipal Purchasing Group made by Councilman Craig and seconded by Supervisor Brown.

Councilwoman Snyder: Aye Councilwoman Lamberta: Aye
 Councilman Smith: Aye

Councilman Craig had copies of the latest sales tax receipts that he passed to the board. For the period of October 2007-February 2008 sales tax received was \$27,684 and for the period of October 2008-February 2009 \$14,605 in sales tax was received, and this will impact the town's fiscal situation.

Supervisor Brown said he tried to be conservative with his numbers when he prepared the latest budget and cut them in anticipation of the fiscal climate and will compare numbers when he sees the first quarter numbers to see what the board should be aware of.

Councilman Smith reiterated that whenever possible purchases should be made in Columbia County.

Open to Public

Nan Elliot feels that Germantown needs more active communication and shared some of her ideas. Supervisor Brown suggested she contact the Economic Development to share her thought and ideas with Corinne Curry. She also shared information with Councilman Smith about a matching funds program available for tourism.

Art Schiff shared his displeasure about the county's decision to purchase the Ockawamick building and move Social Services there.

Cindy Smith questioned the parking rules as a friend recently received a parking ticket and Mrs. Smith hasn't been able to get a concrete response on what the rules are. Councilman Smith indicated he wants to bring this to the Police Commissioner's attention.

Larry Osgood questioned the status of his recommendation of replacing the current animal control officer, as he doesn't feel the officer is doing his job. Supervisor Brown indicated he spoke with the supervisor of the town currently employing Mr. Osgood's recommended replacement and is still working on the issue.

Mr. Osgood stated his concern about the trees cut in the park and that it should be kept under control on public property.

Mr. Osgood asked Councilman Craig about the Re-Zoning meeting and Mr. Craig responded that they will be talking about the process and gathering input from residents and hopes to have people from the county attend as well. No specifics will be discussed and he will make sure notification about the meeting is posted.

Kay Abraham confirmed with Supervisor Brown that the Re-Zoning forum as well as the Sewer forum would be recorded and shown. She suggested the board get background for the sewer meeting from the original proposal and set up and questioned when the County Board of Supervisors would address handicapped access for the county court house.

Supervisor Brown indicated the county is under a consent order from the Office of Court Administration to address accessibility issues.

Martin Overrington questioned the time of the truck purchase and verified the funding for them with Councilman Craig responding that the vehicles previously had not been replaced on a regular cycle and two trucks wouldn't pass inspection anymore which further necessitated the purchase. Mr. Craig and the rest of the board agreed with Mr. Overrington that this came at a bad time financially.

Mr. Overrington expressed his dissatisfaction with the sewer reduction request, as it didn't state where they would be mailed and there was no privacy statement included.

Mr. Overrington reminded the audience the Germantown Drama Club is presenting Once Upon a Mattress March 20th and 21st at 7:30 at the school and a matinee would be held March 22nd at 2:00.

Betty Ahrens inquired about the progress of installing lights in the parking lot, as now there is no lighting at all.

Supervisor Brown responded that the light pole was hit and the light doesn't work but that he is working on getting some lighting for the parking lot. He also confirmed with her that the four new poles by the Activity Building are for basketball purposes.

The next town board meeting is April 20th at 7:00pm.

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

Respectfully submitted,