

Minutes of October 19, 2009 Germantown Town Board meeting, held at the Germantown Town Hall, Germantown, NY, commencing at 7:00pm

Present: Supervisor Roy Brown
Councilwoman Joan Snyder
Councilman Joel Craig
Councilman Jeremy Smith
Town Lawyer Sonja VanBortell, representing Jason Shaw

Not Present: Councilwoman Graceann Lamberta

Recorded by: Town Clerk Charlene Diehl

Supervisor Brown opened the meeting and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Motion to approve the September town board meeting minutes made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Smith, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to approve paying the audited bills from the abstract made by Councilman Craig and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilman Smith: Aye

Communication - Town Clerk (letters available at the Clerk's Office)

- Letters of appreciation from parents regarding the summer parks program and thanks to Austin for supervising the program
- Public hearing on the proposed budget is scheduled for November 5th at 7:00pm at the Town Hall

Richard Wambach, the Webmaster of the town's website, gave a presentation on the website, demonstrated several enhancements that have been added onto it, and spoke about features that can be added later, i.e.:

- calendar features that can send out mass e-mail notices when something is posted;
- sending the GtowNews out via e-mail;
- search engine that is limited to the web site only;
- forms that can be filled in online
- history of Germantown
- town map, parcel locators and GIS capabilities

Councilman Smith asked about putting information on the town's upcoming anniversary celebrations on the website and Mr. Wambach offered to assist him in getting the information posted.

Councilwoman Snyder asked about getting an expenditure breakdown for the ideas Mr. Wambach has mentioned adding to the site.

James Gushlaw, from Southern Columbia Little League, spoke about the town's athletic fields and their desired plan to update the ball fields and add soccer fields to the park. There is a growing league that has been using the ball fields but they would like their own field. Mr. Gushlaw met with Dan Wheeler who surveyed the property and will do a cost analysis which they hope to have in the next month. He is proposing adding 2-3 soccer fields below the ball fields, which is sufficient for two junior fields.

Germantown is behind in that most towns have updated fields and it's important to take these plans into consideration for this year's budget. There is a joint venture possibility between the soccer league, Little League and the town. Home Depot and Lowe's will help as well, and outside sources will be approached once the cost estimates have been submitted.

Councilwoman Snyder asked about the price and Mr. Gushlaw said there is no core cost analysis yet. Another option he presented was to use the field by the Activity Building and move the access road.

Councilman Smith asked why the school grounds couldn't be used for soccer and Mr. Gushlaw said they don't like it when the league 'messes up' the fields when they use it. Mr. Smith said that the Parks Commission needs to be involved and the plans and financing should be an inspiration to get the project off the ground. He is not happy about the plan of cutting down some existing trees, but Councilwoman Snyder said a lot of them are dead and would need to be removed anyway.

Mr. Gushlaw hopes to have cost estimates by the end of November and will get a group together to address the project with the Parks Commission.

Department Updates

Highway Department - reported by Joan Snyder

- drainage work has been completed on Maple Avenue;
- docks at Cheviot were removed for the winter;
- docks at the Anchorage are scheduled to be removed on October 27th;
- Highway crew will be blowing ditches and culverts to remove the leaves;
- crew starting to prepare trucks and equipment for the winter season.

Sewer - reported by Joan Snyder

- average daily flow - 26,000 gallons;
- total of 41 home inspections have been completed;
- repairs, replacement of valves and installation of a new valve pit for Pump Station #2 has been completed, and site work and clean up is being finished.

Parks & Maintenance - reported by Anthony Cidras

- everything is out of the lake;
- scheduled maintenance on UV systems was done;
- fuel tanks have been painted;
- closed down bathrooms at the beach house and drained water lines;
- closed down Anchorage and Cheviot;
- drained water lines to Parsonage garage and pavilion;
- brought in all picnic tables, grills and volleyball nets;
- filled large hole on the beach side of the lake;
- fans in Activity Building are down;
- winter cleanup of Activity Building has begun;
- time spent at Dales Bridge working on fencing.

Anthony thanked Rich, Joey, Pat and Tony for helping to move the dock by the lake, brush hogging, and removing the old bridge and digging it out.

Councilman Craig remarked that the Cheviot docks looked rough and Anthony will be rebuilding them over the winter and that he has the foundation for the bridge as well. He also put stakes in around the lake and will put streamers across it in an attempt to eliminate the goose problem.

Police Department – reported by Commissioner Roger Rekow

- 244 hours of patrol time logged for September – Mr. Rekow reminded the board and audience that only 19 hours are payable per officer and the rest of the hours are unpaid due to the volunteer cadets on the force.

Commissioner Rekow reported that the officers will attend a domestic violence refresher course in Red Hook, as part of their annual training requirements.

Economic Development - reported by Corinne Curry

- ArtSpace opened on October 9th and there were 50-60 folks at the opening, and thanks go to the Crews family for displaying their illustrations;
- ArtSpace will run through November 5th;
- Thanks to Mr. Einhorn for the use of the space and to Austin Sullivan for hanging the pictures, as well as to Roy Brown, the sitters and all the people involved in preparing for the reception.
- October 24th will be Discover Germantown with a book sale and farmer's market at the library, a porch party at the renovated Central House that will feature foods from local vendors, and a booth with apple pies, apple soup, and other dishes made from apples.

Ms. Curry reported on the September 24th focus group meeting with River Street Developers and that Germantown cannot support an active business community and that events will be planned to help bring in people from other areas and put Germantown on the map.

Councilman Smith thanked Ms. Curry for her work with the Economic Development Committee and how beneficial ArtSpace is to the town; he would like to see about putting some monies in the budget to rent the space to continue the project.

Supervisor Brown asked about the possibility of a holiday show at ArtSpace and Ms. Curry will look into it.

Re-Zoning Committee - Reported by Joel Craig

- Meeting held on October 12th where the committee has been going through the Table of Uses;
- Next meeting scheduled for November 9th at 6:00pm at the Town Hall.

300/400 Anniversary – reported by Jerry Smith

- Looking at details of plans of events;
- Will meet with webmaster about putting information pertaining to the anniversary celebrations on the website;
- Liaison with Economic Development Committee;
- Fund raising going well;
- Looking for folks to put on celebration next summer and the committee will work with them on their event.

Parks Commission – reported by Michael George

- parade and tree lighting first weekend in December;
- next meeting is November 17th.

Old Business

Bid Openings were done for:

1988 Dodge Pickup

Motion was made to accept the highest bid of \$350 from Columbia Landscape Corp by Councilman Craig and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder.

Supervisor Brown: abstained from voting Councilman Smith: Aye

1995 Ford Crown Victoria

Motion was made to accept the highest bid of \$265 from Joseph Mabb by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Craig.

Supervisor Brown: Aye Councilman Smith: Aye

Craftsman Mowers (2)

Motion was made to accept the highest bid of \$110 from Teresa Ebling for both mowers by Councilman Craig and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder.

Supervisor Brown: Aye

Councilman Smith: Aye

The winning bidders will be contacted and given 10 days to pick up their vehicle or equipment

Analemma Resolution – The clerk read a resolution that would approve the building on an analemma in a spot designated by the town board in preparation of Germantown's 300th celebration of the Palatines. Before a vote of the board could commence there was an inquiry in the audience from Arthur Schiff requesting some discussion from the public before the resolution was put to a vote.

Mr. Smith, who wrote the resolution, answered some questions about the project in consultation with the architects of it, and urged the board to approve the resolution.

Sonya VanBortell indicated that since the project will become a monument it is subject to permissive referendum, but it's not mandatory so the board can vote on the resolution if they choose.

Ellen Epstein spoke and thinks a professional opinion should be sought on how deep the pole should be, and that technical advice should be sought as well before proceeding with the project.

Arthur Schiff stated his concern about Germantown parkland and that the last time a public hearing was held regarding establishing a monument it was controversial. He is concerned about the process, cost and liabilities and advises doing the process correctly to avoid future regrets.

Councilman Smith indicated he will rewrite the resolution to include seeking expertise and will use Ms. Epstein and Mr. Schiff for assistance.

Supervisor Brown suggested Councilman Smith look into the matter further and bring more information to the next months board meeting.

In response to inquiries about what the project will look like when completed, the architects of the analemma submitted a draft sketch of the project.

Resolution 35 – Wastewater Treatment Plant Request for Proposal

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Germantown has reviewed the report issued by Tectonic Engineering Associates, the Engineers to the Town, dated December 23, 2008 in connection with the Germantown Wastewater Treatment Plant; and

WHEREAS, the Town has submitted a funding application to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation ("EFC") for the funding of repairs at the Germantown Wastewater Treatment Plant; and

WHEREAS, in order to qualify for EFC stimulus money funding, the project must be "shovel ready" prior to February, 2010; and

WHEREAS, in order to comply with this requirement, the Town Board desires an RFP, Request for Proposal, be written for the Town of Germantown as it relates to the design plans for the proposed repairs and upgrades to the Germantown Wastewater Treatment Plant; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Germantown does authorize David Robinson, WWTP consultant to the Town, prepare an RFP for the repairs and upgrades needed at the Germantown Wastewater Treatment Plant, this 19th day of October, 2009 at a cost not to exceed \$250.00.

Motion to approve the resolution to prepare an RFP for the repairs and upgrades needed at the Germantown Wastewater Treatment Plant, at a cost not to exceed \$250.00, was made by Councilman Craig and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder.

Supervisor Brown: Aye

Councilman Smith: Aye

Supervisor's Reports

- budget workshop scheduled for Tuesday, October 20th is cancelled;
- a three-town initiative on economic development is underway and one of the projects is an overlay map of the three towns, Germantown, Livingston and Clermont;

- new DEC rules regarding brush burning came out effective October 14, 2009 and burning leaves is no longer permissible per the State;
- Office of the Aging will be at the Town Hall on Friday, November 6th from 10:30-12:00 to help Germantown residents with the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Lauren Beck will be on hand to help residents understand and apply for the program.
- Retired Individuals Driving Elderly (RIDE) is in need of volunteers to drive seniors to health related appointments, including hospice, and is also in need of people to deliver Meals on Wheels to homebound Germantown residents. Tina Sharpe at Columbia Opportunities can be contacted for those interested and information is posted outside of the Town Clerk's office.
- Discover Germantown Day II will be held on October 24th from 10:00-3:00pm. The Germantown Library and the Germantown Lion's Club have events going on as well and information is posted outside of the Town Clerk's office.
- County is down approximately 5% in sales tax revenue compared to last year at the same time. The third quarter report from the state should be available later this week, which will give the county an idea where we will end up for the year. The town as well as the County is waiting for this information before we complete our budgets for 2010. The County will finish ahead of budget for 2009, due to the hiring freeze and spending limits imposed in January of this year. The County budget for 2010 right now is forecast to come in under 5%.

Open to Public

Tim Otty said that the mitigation of storm water on Cheviot Road has made things better. He said that this is election time of the year and his biggest concern is the distortion of information, specifically about information being published that is not correct. He said he has a receipt that the loader purchased by the town cost \$105,00, not the amount that was published recently.

Arthur Schiff said he readily admits he used the wrong numbers for the loader when he actually meant the truck.

Kay Abraham said she contacted the papers and addressed the commercials to correct the error as quickly as possible and apologized for the error.

Mrs. Abraham said that the general public hasn't seen the drawings for the proposed analemma and they should be posted and if any negative comments are garnered perhaps the board can schedule a short public hearing for comments.

Ellen Epstein said that the ball fields are a multi-town interest and the board should look into other towns assisting with the funding necessary to put in the new fields. She said the stream may be an issue in putting in the ball fields, as drainage raises costs and that as trees are removed it causes storm water problems and is it standard practice to overlay fields in design.

Nan Elliot said she thinks it would be helpful if board members as well as the public know if presentations are going to be held at board meetings and that more needs to be done in this area of notification. She thinks the presenters should remain through the meeting to hear comments from others rather than leaving after their presentation.

The next town board meeting is November 16th at 7:00pm.

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

Respectfully submitted,