

Minutes of December 14, 2009 Germantown Town Board meeting, held at the Germantown Town Hall, Germantown, NY, commencing at 7:00pm

Present: Supervisor Roy Brown
Councilwoman Joan Snyder
Councilwoman Graceann Lamberta
Councilman Joel Craig
Councilman Jeremy Smith
Highway Superintendent Rich Jennings
Town Lawyer Sonja VanBortell, representing Jason Shaw

Recorded by: Town Clerk Charlene Diehl

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

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

The board questioned a bill from DF Wheeler for doing a survey of town property to size up the area requested for soccer fields, per the proposal by Mr. Gushlaw at the October town board meeting. Councilman Smith said he finds this bill difficult to accept, as the subcommittee wasn't aware that a survey would be taking place, and would like the issue deferred until January when the board can reopen the issue.

A repair bill of \$800 for the Crown Victoria was also questioned, and Councilwoman Snyder asked why the police department was still using the vehicle, and the board should look at taking it off the road. Supervisor Brown said 300 miles have been put on the vehicle over 4 months and he, as well as the oversight committee, was not aware of the repairs either. Mr. Brown asked the board to pay the bill and look into the matter further.

Councilman Smith agreed with the action, and said this should apply to the survey bill as well.

Motion to approval paying the bills as presented made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilwoman Lamberta.

Supervisor Brown:	Aye	Councilwoman Lamberta:	Aye
Councilwoman Snyder:	Aye	Councilman Craig:	Abstained
Councilman Smith:	Aye		

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

- The Cantata, originally scheduled for December 13th, will be held on December 20th at the Reformed Church.

Department Updates

Highway Department - reported by Joan Snyder

- The 2000 450 tool truck is here and being readied for service;
- Snow policy is in effect for the town;
- Folks who want to take sand from the town sand shed should contact the Highway Department first – they are allowed 2 five-gallon buckets of sand;
- Highway Superintendent recommends the town board accept Crawford Lane as a road.

Supervisor Brown said the Department of Transportation (DOT) hasn't put signs up yet, so Rich Jennings is not asking the board to accept it now. Once the road is done it will be offered to the board for acceptance at a vote.

Sewer - reported by Joan Snyder

- average flow is 24,000 gallons.

Supervisor Brown said he is going to meet with Department of Environmental Conservation on December 21st at 1:00 to discuss the wastewater treatment plant.

Parks & Maintenance - reported by Anthony Cidras

- finished guard rail at Cheviot;
- flower pot benches have been made;
- thanks to the Highway Department for helping decorate the village;
- leaves and downed tree limbs have been removed from the parks;
- 150 bass and 1,000 minnows were added to the pond/lake;
- lumber to replace the picnic table tops was picked up and will be sealed when warmed;
- thanks to George Fox for donating the electric for the tree lighting.

Anthony presented estimates he had gathered for toilet replacements for the Kellner Youth and Activity Building. The estimate for five high-pressure assisted toilets was: Lowes: \$1,945 Grainger: \$1,909 Williams: \$1,636

Supervisor Brown reminded the board that Anthony was a Department Head who came to the budget meetings and was asked to get this proposal together, so the board was aware of the need.

Motion to approve the purchase of five high-pressure assisted toilets from Williams for \$1,636 was made by Councilwoman Snyder and seconded by Councilman Smith.

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

Councilman Craig asked about the status of the light in the parking lot. Mr. Cidras said the line would be replaced on December 16th and put in a conduit. Mr. Craig said he had several comments/complaints about the geese but Supervisor Brown said a presentation would be coming up later in the meeting regarding the geese at the pond/lake.

Eli Fieser, representing the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, gave a presentation on Senior Safety Net. This is a program set up between the Sheriff's Office and the Columbia County Office for the Aging, which is basically a senior hotline. Individuals contact the Sheriff's Office to enroll in the program, and every morning the person will receive a call to make sure they're in good health. The program is for anyone over the age of 21 who lives alone and does not have anyone to contact them to make sure they're ok.

Councilwoman Lamberta asked that the information regarding this program be put on the town website and Councilman Craig asked that information also be made available at the Town Clerk's office as well.

Police Department – reported by Roger Rekow

190 hours of patrol time was logged in for the month of November

Park Commission - reported by Joan Snyder

Councilwoman Snyder reported on the tree lighting ceremony held on December 6th. The pre-school children were in attendance with homemade ornaments for the tree, which was lit by Donna Diehl. She thanked Mrs. Diehl for her contributions to the town, the volunteers and Roberta Griffin who helped set up. The leftovers were donated to the Food Pantry.

Councilman Craig asked Supervisor Brown to give a quick synopsis of the special town board meeting held on November 30th.

Supervisor Brown said the Highway Department was having trouble with the tool vehicle. They found a replacement, a 2000 E450 that is basically an ambulance, at a cost of \$8,000. This vehicle stores equipment they use on the road and also shelters the men during winter work.

The charge-back agreement for Northern Dutchess Ambulance was approved, at a 10% increase.

Economic Development – reported by Roy Brown

Supervisor Brown said a show would be starting on January 15th called Friends of Hudson Valley, featuring artists living in Germantown, Tivoli and Livingston. The show will run for one month with details forthcoming.

400/300 Anniversary – reported by Jeremy Smith

- thanked the board for approving the Analemma project
- stone for the Analemma project has been procured, and Councilman Smith will ask the highway crew to help transport it from the quarry;
- met with Bruce Bohnsack and staff from Gtel will hang the banners in town;
- a nephew of Andy Warhol will be designing a logo to put on the salt shed;
- next meeting is January 12th;

Councilman Smith brought up the bad state of repair of the path at the Parsonage, and proposed that any monies remaining in the 2009 historic property account be rolled over to 2010 to cover the expenses for repairs. He is working on securing quotes for the project, but wants to make sure the monies are available and they don't go to the General Fund.

Councilwoman Snyder asked if the sidewalk to the Parsonage has to be ADA accessible, and do we want to make the sidewalk look historic. Supervisor Brown asked Anthony to touch base with Jerry in investigating potential repairs and gathering quotes.

Mr. Emil Erickson, Councilwoman Snyder's intern, gave a presentation on the problem with geese at the lake/pond. He said there are several methods of removal such as herding dogs, decoys, and pyrotechnics. Goose feces carries germs and also fertilizes water chestnuts, which is a problem the town is experiencing. Mr. Erickson thanked Anthony for working with him.

Councilman Smith asked Supervisor Brown for an update on the presentation Delaware Engineering had done on the Waste Water Treatment Plant and their proposal to resolve long-term issues and needed repairs.

Supervisor Brown said he met with Delaware Engineering and Facilities Corporation and they are putting a proposal together of what the cost to the town would be and they will assist the town in securing grant monies. Councilman Smith said he trusts some long-term plans will be made regarding the sewer plant.

Councilman Smith said he had gotten some complaints about the town web site not being user-friendly and asked about the updates the web-master had spoke about. He wonders if the school could be brought in to have students help. Supervisor Brown said he's been in touch with the web-master and there are plans for changes after the first of the year.

Councilman Smith asked about the energy audit that was done and what recommendations have been implemented. Supervisor Brown said the town is waiting for NYSERDA to release the funding. They've been contacted twice and haven't heard

back. Councilman Smith asked if there was anything within the report the town could do.

Councilman Smith asked about the 9G bridge at Roe Jan, and Supervisor Brown relayed that action has been taken to being the repair of the bridge by DOT.

Councilman Smith said he still hasn't received the list of all town accounts he had requested from Supervisor Brown. The Supervisor said he would give him a new copy at the end of the year along with a clean copy of the budget, which will be put on the web site.

Councilman Smith said he wants to discuss the notice of meetings. Supervisor Brown asked what more Councilman Smith thought could be done to notify people about the town board meetings.

Councilman Smith asked Mr. Beaury about the status of the project with his interns, and Mr. Beaury said the students are preparing their report.

Supervisor's Reports

- thanks to Joan Snyder and Mike George who did a great job on the Park Commission sponsored tree lighting ceremony and activities following at the Kellner Community Youth and Activity Building.
- Mike George will be stepping down as Chairperson of the Parks Commission. Anyone interested in serving on the commission should contact Austin Sullivan.
- The County is assessing the governor's call to withhold millions of dollars to schools and municipalities and Supervisor Brown suggests curtailing spending as much as possible for at least the next six months, by leaving the memo of limited spending in place during that timeframe.

Councilwoman Snyder thanked Mike George for his work on the Parks Commission and hopes he will be able to return when his health is improved.

Stephen Reynolds, Chairman of the Planning Board, asked the board to consider the cost of a new wetlands map. The Planning Board has been visiting sites throughout the town and there are water and streams that impact properties, and the Planning Board feels having a map will help applicants as well as board members see where wetlands are. They feel the map will save time and money in the future, and will be a great tool that they can make available at their meetings. The cost is approximately \$150 and the map comes on a CD-rom as well. Don Melts, a GIS map technician, would be doing the work.

Motion to approve the purchase of a new wetlands map made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilwoman Snyder.

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

Supervisor Brown made a recommendation to the board to look at Crawford Lane between now and the next town board meeting so that the board can vote on the town taking possession of the road if the Highway Superintendent recommends it.

Open to Public

Larry Osgood: asked about the soccer field survey and what location in the park they are talking about, as his recollection is that area has water issues. He agrees with Councilwoman Snyder about public notices for meetings but thinks it would be useful for the board to fund some signs to announce the meetings.

He mentioned that dozens of volunteers are working on plans for Germantown's celebration in October 2010 during the first two weekends of the month. The first

weekend will feature authors on Palatines coming in for a presentation at the school on Saturday at 11:00, with a play being considered as well. There will be a special church service on the first Sunday at the Viewmont church and a Sunday afternoon gala concert at the Reformed Church. Donna Diehl's chorus will participate and Reverend Tipple's group will take part as well. Harold Farberman will write a piece based on hymns of the period, and they are considering asking Sonny Rollins to participate.

Octoberfest will be held on the second weekend in October 2010, with a parachute drop from West Point.

The committee is working on digitizing photos and getting oral histories from the senior residents in the town. Mr. Osgood asked why the town board has not stepped forward to offer funding for this celebration. He would like to present the committee's budget at January's town board meeting and see what the board can contribute, as they are doing a lot to put Germantown on the map and would like some monies.

Supervisor Board said the board appreciates and is grateful for all the efforts being put forth by the committee for this celebration and will look into some funding sources. He said he'll need something concrete in writing to present to folks for funding resources. Councilwoman Lamberta suggested New York State Tourism as a place to contact for funding.

Kerrie Abella, who owns Palatine Park Pizza, asked about the flags that businesses were asked to contribute toward. Councilman Smith said the committee is investigating other funding avenues and any business that contributes will be acknowledged.

Councilwoman Snyder suggested getting sponsors from Columbia county businesses.

Kay Abraham: reported the freezer in the Activities Building doesn't work and is very old and that the board may want to look into donations from someone to replace it.

Mrs. Abraham said the school and the firehouse have marquees and she thinks the town should have one announcing the meetings. She said the town should get a sign resembling a monument and it could perhaps be funded by a fund drive or sponsorships.

Mrs. Abraham mentioned the member changes to the Park Commission and Safety Committee and that the board hasn't had a chance to discuss such items to plan for changes that need to occur.

David Gifford: finds the town website frustrating to use and nothing on the site gives him information on the fire department. He said the Firehouse and Library websites are not updated periodically. He also asked if the town has written cost avoidance and cost targets to measure against, and that if you don't have a plan to work towards nothing will be accomplished.

Councilman Smith said that the memo to control and be aware of costs that went out last year has helped the town keep costs contained but more can always be done.

Councilwoman Snyder said that items brought before the board by the highway department are generally discussed prior to meetings. Councilman Smith said there was only one written proposal he saw and agrees that metrics are needed.

Martin Overrington: finds it upsetting to see new vehicles being driven by the highway department and wants the board to keep heads together when discussing new purchases and save money. He wished everyone Happy Holidays.

The year-end meeting will be December 28th at 9:00am.
The Organizational meeting will be January 4th at 6:00pm.
The next town board meeting is January 25th at 7:00pm.

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

Respectfully submitted,