

Minutes  
Richford Town Board Meeting June 11, 2013

The Town of Richford Board meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Supervisor Wilcox. All Board members except Councilwoman Brown were present. Highway superintendent Mike Holt was present and three townspeople were also in attendance.

The minutes of the May 14, 2013 Town Board meeting were presented for review. It was asked that the following typos be corrected: page one, paragraph five change that to than in sentence five; page two, paragraph four, sentence six, change meet to met; page three, paragraph three, sentence ten, change McMann to McMahon; page three, paragraph four, sentence one, delete will meet. Also correct page two, sentence one, Stelle correct to Stell. Councilman Brown, seconded by Councilman Miller, made a motion to accept the May 14 minutes as amended. All approved; minutes accepted as amended.

Let the minutes reflect that the April and May Town Clerk's reports were reviewed. Town Supervisor report for May 2013 was presented.

Highway Superintendent Holt gave a report for May 2013. Rear brake system on the garbage truck had to be replaced costing \$1200-1300. Superintendent Holt asks the board to be aware that the truck is in decline. Crew has been working on seasonal roads, weather has been an issue. West Hill was graveled week of June 3 using town's gravel which is inferior but cost prohibited purchase of better quality gravel. Crew changed pipes on Robinson Hollow. Between rains crew is working on pipe project. He began mowing road sides today. Superintendent Holt notes that he is using his personal trailer to haul pipe as the town does not own a trailer. Also, town does not own a compacting hand tamp. When piping, gravel surrounding pipe must be tamped every six inches in order to meet guidelines. Tamp can be rented at \$150/day or buy new for \$1400.

Superintendent Holt address question brought up by Councilman Miller last meeting regarding the use of road oil. Superintendent Holt researched and the oil is \$1.60 per gallon plus the charge to have it applied. Oil would be used for dust control. We would need approximately 20,000 gallon to do what is done with salt brine(?) Supervisor Wilcox asks what calcium chloride costs per gallon. Superintendent Holt will have to research that but recalls it was around \$1.10 a gallon. Sixty-six thousand gallons of salt brine where used last year at \$.01 per gallon. The town is responsible for applying salt brine. Road oil is applied once while salt brine has to be reapplied. Superintendent Holt will research how much calcium chloride would be needed for a season. Councilman Miller states that the road oil lessens wear on the roads. Salt brine, like the winter salt applied, breaks down the roads. Salt brine cannot be used on a 10% grade or close to a creek, road oil could most likely been used anywhere.

Superintendent Holt's crew has also been hauling sand; 400-500 ton thus far. Cinders are complete. Coal patch order of 100 ton has been received. Superintendent Holt has it made up instead of buying new as it saves town approximately \$30-35 a ton. Crew will start black top patching when rain subsides. Rain is drastically hurting progress of brush cutting on all rural roads. Brush is currently cut by crew with chain saws. Superintendent Holt would like to rent a tractor with boom mower on it that will cut all the brush along side the roads. The cost of \$2000 for a week and the job is complete compared to four men with chain saws and weeks of man hours. Newark Valley has a brush cutter but they will not let it out.

Councilwoman Herrick comments on narrowness of Brigham Road. It is one lane only in long stretches. She worries that the Barden Road Bridge project will increase the traffic on Brigham making it a dangerous situation. Superintendent Holt can make Brigham and West Hill one ways for the duration of the Barden Road Bridge project. Will address under old business.

Superintendent Holt has ordered the speed limit signs for town roads. The town is responsible for ordering, purchasing, and installing. Signs and posts are ordered; seven 25mph and two 40mph signs are on order.

Superintendent Holt plans to tear the Barden Road Bridge out beginning July 15. Supervisor Wilcox comments that before July 1 letters will need to be sent to affected residents and a notice put in the town paper. Detour signs will be put up ahead of time. The county is allowing the town the use of their detour, one-way signs, whatever we need that they have.

Let the minutes reflect there is no dog control office report for May. The Justice Court report for May has an enclosed check for \$1125. The Code Enforcement Officer report for May reflects two building permits, two building permit renewals, four building permit renewal notices, one building permit inquiry, total construction cost \$8500, fees collected \$250, total of seven inspections.

Planning Board report given by Bill Stell, only planning board member present. Last planning board meeting consensus is that they are not moving forward as fast as hoped. They have questions that can only be answered by a lawyer. Is there grant or town money to use for a lawyer? Mr. Stell suggests adopting current plan and sending it to the town attorney. Mr. Stell will get together with Superintendent Holt regarding assessment of our roads and his concerns of rapid deterioration if a drilling company begins using our roads. The company will not repair the roads until they are done and they could likely become impassable for town citizens.

Councilman Miller, seconded by Councilman Brown, made a motion to pay the vouchers on Abstract #6 and that the vouchers on the Abstract are the same ones signed by the Board. The General Abstract includes vouchers A111 through A134 amounting to \$9,455.59. The Highway Abstract includes vouchers DA113 through DA135, amounting to \$22,407.44. All approved, vouchers will be paid.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Councilwoman Herrick expresses concern of metal rods left at Park where bench used to be. Mike will remove those when he gets a dry day.

Councilwoman Herrick addresses Supervisor Wilcox about questions raised on contract in the last executive session and if he has answers. Supervisor Wilcox is still waiting on answers but has some information. Information to be reviewed in executive session after regular town board meeting is adjourned.

Supervisor Wilcox addresses issue raised by Superintendent Holt and his need for a tamp to complete the bridge work. A new tamp is \$1400, no used tamps are available. Renting would be \$800-\$900 for the bridge project and then would need to rent again for anything upcoming. At Supervisor Wilcox's request, Councilman Brown, seconded by Councilwoman Herrick, made a motion to approve the purchase of a new tamp out of highway department account DA5130.A. All approved. Motion passed.

Supervisor Wilcox addresses Superintendent Holt regarding one-way roads. The town has the legal authority to make West Hill one-way north (up) and Brigham Road one-way south (down). West Hill one-way will begin at Y and Brigham will begin one-way at seasonal sign. Councilman Miller, seconded by Councilman Brown, made a motion to authorize Highway Superintendent Holt to make West Hill north and Brigham Road south one-ways for the duration of the Barden Road Bridge project. All approved. Motion passed.

Superintendent Holt notes that Berkshire has still not paid for the town's used pick up truck. Berkshire's superintendent will turn in voucher at next board meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Supervisor Wilcox spoke with Fran Butler who is up for reappointment as town assessor in September. The term is five years. Fran is a certified assessor and has done a good job for the town. Supervisor Wilcox wants the board to be aware that this will need to be address at the August board meeting. If the board is in agreement a motion would be made to reappoint her.

Fran Butler brought to Supervisor Wilcox's attention that in 2010-2011 the board signed an agreement with the State of New York to do a re-evaluation in 2014. The stipulation was that the town would get paid every year, maintenance pay, on maintaining full value assessment. If we did not do re-eval in 2014 the town would have to pay the money back. The town never received any monies from the state. So, the town is under need obligation to do a re-evaluation, re-assessment. Supervisor Wilcox has been notified by the Board of Taxation and Finance that the equalization rate this year will be 100%; so the town is good for this year. Supervisor Wilcox will leave it to the board whether it wants to do a reassessment or not. Full value assessment is cleaner, less controversial the partial assessment. Supervisor Wilcox reminds the board that we have the state forest land and if we do not maintain full value assessment the state will bring foresters in to appraise the forest lands as forest lands and we only appraise it as vacant land. Because they will see that we are under assessing the state forest lands, the equalization rate will drop. That is something for the board to think about. As long as we maintain full value assessments, the state will accept them. If there are questions on assessing state lands, contact Fran Butler.

Supervisor Wilcox comments that concerned citizens contacted the state about the intersection of 38 and 79. They were lobbying for a traffic signal to be installed. In 1984-85 this same request was rejected. Presently the state did a routine safety study as the intersection appeared on a NYS DOT high accident location list. Due to the results of the study the state is initiating relocation of the stop bars closer to the intersection so it will be easier for drivers to make eye contact with each other. A traffic signal operational or warrant analysis was done. Using an average summer weekday traffic counting, we did not meet any of the eight standard traffic signal warrants. Additional traffic volumes were obtained to reflect the Ithaca area college traffic. Highest traffic volume day was used and the intersection still did not meet any state warrants. Traffic signal warrants are set forth on a nation wide document ensuring consistency from town to town and state to state. At least one of the eight warrants must be met to justify installation of a three color traffic signal. The state feels the severity of the crashes would increase with the installation of a three color traffic signal. They also feel that driver delay would increase leading to driver frustration and the increase in aggressive driver tendencies. While it is their goal to reduce accidents at this intersection, a traffic signal is not the solution at this time. They are looking at improving the turning radius of this intersection to better accommodate large trucks. Other possible changes being considered; minor changes to sidewalk ramps at the corners to meet current ADA accessibility standards. Councilman Miller would like to follow up on this. The traffic on Sunday nights is very heavy after the races. He would like to see a light that is blinking Monday-Saturday but changes to stop and go on Sunday nights and/or Friday nights. Supervisor Wilcox doesn't feel there is anything more he or the town can do.

Supervisor Wilcox received a phone call regarding side walks in town. Is the state, town or home owner responsible for repairs? Supervisor Wilcox believes he previously found that while the state put them in, the town is responsible for upkeep. He will research further. He wants the board to be aware that town side walks may become an issue.

Superintendent Holt brings to the attention of the board that the county sited the guardrails on the Rockefeller Bridge again. No fines have been issued at this put, just a write up. These guardrails are so old he cannot even get parts for them anymore. The bridge was put in in 1937. Councilman Miller states concern of the towns' liability issue if someone goes through them and is injured. Councilwoman Herrick brings forth the safety issue. Superintendent Holt confirms that if someone drives into them with any speed, they will not hold. The bridge did not fail inspection, just the guardrails.

Councilman Miller brings forth the topic of unlicensed dogs in the Town of Richford. He asks that the town clerk pull a report enumerating the number of dog licenses issued.

Councilman Miller queries whether or not there is progress at 712 Harford Road. Those in attendance do not feel any progress has been made despite Mr. McMahon's efforts. The Hyde property was brought up. The property is in decay, in need of demolition. Owner lives in Broome County and not responding. Mr. McMahon sent certified letters that were returned undeliverable. Mr. McMahon is waiting on the town's lawyer for next steps. The process is time consuming and costly.

## PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Dory Karasin states that the town road crew has added extra width up Barden Road and left it for a few days with no guardrails or anything so it is a safety issue. He would at least like road cones or reflectors put up. Supervisor Wilcox will speak to Superintendent Holt on this issue.

Mr. Stell states that quite a few sections of pipe were together but are now dismantled. Why the delay? Townsperson Twig repeats what he heard; the pipe was put together wrong but the crew now has the instructions and will reassemble. Mr. Stell brings up another safety issue with the bridge project. When the top of bridge is cut out that will leave the bridge open. When the road is shut down concrete barriers should be put on either side as a safety measure. Not just signs, we need more safety measures. Supervisor Wilcox will talk to Superintendent Holt regarding the safety issues.

Mr. Stell speaks to the issue of buying a trailer for the road crew to use to haul piping, the dozer, and the grater. Constantly driving the dozer and grater up and down the town roads is harsh wear on expensive pieces of equipment. Supervisor Wilcox says funds are, as always, an issue.

Mr. Stell questions who is caring for the West Hill Cemetery. Supervisor Wilcox states that it is an abandoned, certified illegal by the state to use as burying grounds. There is no cemetery association to take care of this cemetery. Mr. Stell would like to take on the West Hill Cemetery clean up project.

Dory Karasin proclaims it has been three years since the town affirmed Michaud Road as a road. Since that time there has been no work done on the road. His parents live on that road and he wants it graded and made passable. Supervisor Wilcox states that the county will not survey that road. Mr. Karasin wants the board to follow up on this and get a survey done. Mr. Karasin states that his parents pay their taxes, and have for 30 years, and they want results or the town will be sued. He is putting the board on notice. Supervisor Wilcox brings up the issue of the junk on the property so close to the road. Mr. Karasin will take care of the junk if he gets results on the road. Mr. Karasin brings up the fact that after the board declared it a town road, there was a gas leak at the residence and his parents had to move out because the gas company could not get to the residence due to the condition of the road rendering the residence uninhabitable. Supervisor Wilcox gives the board background: the road was/is not on town mileage. At the behest of the Karasin's a few years back, the town board decided to start the process of making it a town road. The county was contacted to do the survey and they refused. That is where the issue stood. Lou and Flora Karasin moved out of the residence and Supervisor Wilcox did not see the need to have the town road crew plow a road, not on town mileage, when no one was living there. Mr. Karasin restates that his parents were forced to move because the town refused to plow the road for an emergency. Prior town highway superintendents had plowed the road. Precedent was set and the expectation was there. Previous superintendent Lawton randomly decided to discontinue plowing since only the Karasin's lived up there and made a turn around half way up the road. The Karasin's are just asking the town to do the right thing.

Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilman Brown, made a motion to adjourn the regular town board meeting and call to order executive session. Motion approved, regular meeting was adjourned and executive session called at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by Tina Thurston for  
Judith Thurston, Town Clerk

