

Minutes
Richford Town Board Meeting January 14, 2014

The Town of Richford Board Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Supervisor Wilcox. All Board members were present except Councilman Ken Miller. Highway Superintendent, Mike Holt, was present and six townspeople were also in attendance.

Special guest Lee Ann Tinny, Director of Economic Development for Tioga County, requested to speak to the board. She would like the Richford Town Board to pass a resolution in support of Tioga Downs' bid for a gaming license. She has reached out to each municipality in the county asking for resolutions and they have started a letter writing campaign asking for support from residents, business, papers, everyone they can think of. Part of the process in Tioga Downs needs to show local support for their bid for the gaming license. New York State voters approved proposition one in November to amend the constitution to allow for gaming tables; so there will be gaming tables in New York State. There will be four gaming licenses awarded in the capital district area, Catskill area, and Southern Tier area. There are three businesses making a bid for the license in our region; Tioga Downs in Tioga County, Traditions in the Glenn in Broome County, and a Will Not (?) Corporation in Seneca County. A board will analyze applications and decide who to award the license to. If Broome County gets the license Tioga County could still receive revenue of approximately \$600,000 divided up between schools, county, and towns. If awarded in Tioga County the revenue would be closer to 6.1 million dollars; a substantial amount of additional revenue for the county. There would also be new jobs, probably about 1100 jobs; tourism dollars would be brought into the county. So that's why we're looking for local support for Tioga Downs bid.

Supervisor Wilcox questions the revenue that would come back to the county. Lee Ann says the state will get a portion of that, of what comes back locally, 80% will go to the school districts, 20% will be split between the Town of Nichols and the county and 10% disbursed to surrounding towns. It is a condition of the license that the revenue be distributed as stated. Tioga Downs now pays to the state, the Town of Nichols, and to the county but Lee Ann is unsure of the proportions.

Supervisor Wilcox questions the response of other municipalities in the county. Lee Ann states that they have received resolutions of support from all municipalities with the exception of the Town of Barton; they did not take any action on it. The Village of Spencer gave verbal support and she is awaiting their letter. The Town of Richford is her last contact.

Supervisor Wilcox asks for questions or comments from the board members. Councilwoman Holcomb states she is against gambling and cannot support it. She realizes the revenue and creation of jobs, but she is against gambling. Council Ricky Brown states he is for the gaming license. Councilwoman Herrick feels gambling is highly predatory and doesn't feel the town should be in a position of supporting a specific company. She would have to give this thought. A discussion followed on the benefits of the added revenue and the good it could do the schools and the town. Supervisor Wilcox voices the concern that if Richford takes action against Tioga Downs' bid, the other municipalities may not look favorably on that. The board has four members present, two for and two against. Lee Ann asks that the board take no action rather than a negative action. Lee Ann asks that the decision be made at the February meeting as they are targeting the end of February for their support campaign. Supervisor Wilcox will attend the request to the February meeting agenda. Supervisor Wilcox thanks Lee Ann for speaking with the board.

The minutes of the December 10 and December 30, 2013 Town Board meetings were presented for review. The December 10 minutes need to be amended; first paragraph should read "to evaluate" the Joyce Hyde property, not "demolish and remove." The December 30 minutes need be amended to

include Abstract #13 and that the vouchers on the Abstract are the same ones signed by the Board. The General Abstract includes vouchers A255 through A262 amounting to \$1552.08. Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilman Brown, accepted the December 5, 2013 public hearing minutes, the December 10 and December 30 amended board minutes. All approved.

The Supervisor's for December 2013 was presented. There was no Town Clerks report for December 2013.

Highway Superintendent Holt gave a report for December 2013. He stated that the scale on the garbage truck has been certified. We were a bit out of date on that; they are supposed to be certified every year. They have hauled 1400 ton of sand in December for this year and next and are busy servicing equipment and getting ready for spring.

Councilwoman Holcomb has question on highway vouchers, Superintendent Holt answers questions and will be more diligent in attaching all invoices. Councilman Brown, seconded by Councilwoman C. Herrick, made a motion to pay the vouchers on Abstract #1 and that the vouchers on the Abstract are the same ones signed by the Board. The General Abstract includes vouchers A1 through A17 amounting to \$31,370.54. The Highway Abstract includes vouchers DA1 through DA15 amounting to \$44,046.30. All approved. Vouchers will be paid.

Dog Control officer had no activity to report.

Town of Richford Justice Court for December 2013 amount of enclosed check \$3685.

Code Enforcement Officer report for November 2013; two building permits issued, four violation notices sent, construction costs of \$82,000, \$300 collected. Total of eight inspections and six hours of training.

Charlie Davis gave a Planning Board report for December 2013. He reported the Code of Conduct has been revised, not the boards conduct, but conduct of townspeople attending board meetings. For the Code of Ethics they have used the state model as draft. Full disclosure is not required by a small town, disclosure is required for matters before the board that you have an interest in. Supervisor Wilcox comments that it is enough for a board member to recuse themselves for a conflict of interest and it can be stated in the minutes. Councilwoman Herrick and Councilwoman Holcomb feel a resolution is sufficient, a law is not required. Supervisor Wilcox thanks Planning Board Chair, Charlie Davis, for all their hard work on this project.

Charlie Davis brings up the survey they do on the comprehensive plan and the increase in postage from \$.46 to \$.49 on January 26. They will purchase forever stamps in advance to save on postage. Councilwoman Herrick inquires after news on the post office situation. Supervisor Wilcox needs to return a call and will update at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Herrick introduced the following resolution and it was seconded by Councilman Ricky Brown:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following designations are made for the year 2014:

MILEAGE: \$.48/MILE

DEPOSITORY: NBT Bank, Newark Valley Branch

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER: Tioga County Courier

BOARD MEETING: Second Tuesday of Each Month at 7PM

A roll call vote showed all members voting aye and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilman Brown, made a motion approving the following appointments:

LEGAL SERVICES: True & Walsh, LLP

CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING BOARD: Charles Davis

TOWN HISTORIAN: William Sherwood

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK: Tina Thurston

DEPUTY SUPERVISOR: Richard Harrington

DEPUTY HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT: David Perry

Members Brown, Herrick, and Wilcox approve; Councilwoman Holcomb abstains on the grounds of conflict of interest. Resolution adopted.

Councilwoman Bev Brown, seconded by Councilman Ricky Brown, made the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following salaries be fixed for the year 2014:

TOWN BOARD: \$900 EA. TOTAL: \$3600

JUSTICE: \$5,556

BOOKKEEPER: \$2,000

SUPERVISOR: \$3,900

ASSESSOR: \$5,300

TOWN CLERK: \$4,140

REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS: \$360

TOWN HALL ATTENDANT: \$1,860

DOG CONTROL OFFICER: \$2,500

All of the above yearly salaries to be paid monthly

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT: \$42,900

HIGHWAY DEPT. EMPLOYEES (H.E.O.'S): \$18.15/HR.

Both yearly salaries to be paid bi-weekly.

COURT CLERK: \$10.00/HR.

GARBAGE TRUCK ATTENDANT: \$8.00/HR.

HISTORIAN: \$250/YR.

MAINTENANCE PERSON: \$9.00/HR.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW: \$50 EA.

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW: \$100

A roll call vote showed all members voting aye

Be it resolved the salaries be fixed for 2014.

Tioga Downs resolution will be tabled until the February 11 meeting.

Agreement with Town of Caroline for Code Enforcement Services is up for renewal. The annual fee is \$9,105. Motion to approve and authorized town supervisor to sign and to pay contracted sum by Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilman Brown was unanimously approved. Motion passed and contract is to be signed and paid.

OLD BUSINESS

Supervisor Wilcox distributed current proposal from the highway employees for the contract that expired on December 31. He feels it is time to have a face to face meeting with the highway employees. Councilwoman Herrick concurs that it is time to sit down with them. She is disappointed that their last offer was essentially the same as their prior one. Supervisor Wilcox will contact the men to arrange a meeting.

OLD OR NEW BUSINESS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Given the negative comments received in the past about the emergency squad personnel, Councilwoman Herrick wanted to mention that they had had need of the squad twice in the past few days for her grandmother and while the response might have been a bit slower than you'd like, they were kind, respectful, and knowledgeable.

Supervisor Wilcox commented that the mayor of Newark Valley who is on the squad was to appear before the board but apparently there were no changes so he did not appear. They were inspected by the state and found satisfactory.

Supervisor Wilcox commented that when the budget was adopted a surplus of \$33,000 was estimated for the highway and \$19,000 for general. The actual balance for highway was a little over \$34,000 and balance for general was under \$7000. Wants the board to be aware we'll need to watch expenses this year.

The dog census generated a good response. We may have waited too long to do the census, but with the change from county to town responsibilities, people may have not thought of it since they no longer receive a renewal form.

PRIVELEGE OF THE FLOOR

Emily Stuhlmiller advises the board of the Library sale at the Richford Congregational Church on February 15 from 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. There will also be a bake sale and other items people donate. Sandy Negus is in charge. Also, there is now a pre-school reading group at the Richford Church on Friday's from 10:00-11:00a.m.

Emily Stuhlmiller asks for a copy of the final 2014 budget. Supervisor Wilcox will get to her.

Charlie Davis comments on the fire of a local family who lost a child in that fire. You can look at the Ithaca Journal for information.

Bill Stell would like to know how the property taxes are assessed between state owned land and individual owned land. The state assess their own land. We have a 100% equalization rate so the state will not appraise their lands because they will assess it as forest land and we assess it as vacant land for maximum tax benefit. Property tax is based on your pool as he understands it. The state forest land pays local property taxes and either school or fire district; they don't pay county property taxes. So the pool for the county property tax is smaller. Previous town supervisor instituted keeping a portion of the county sales tax revenue down at the county to off set the county property tax rate because your revenues reduce your property tax rate. Mr. Stell wants to see better assessments. Supervisor Wilcox will have to ask Fran Butler for further clarification and comments that you can appeal your assessment.

Richard Harrington REAP board in resistance work with volunteers assistance from towns and villages no \$ for executive director

Projects REAP has been assisting with Berkshire fire department which is now complete. Malt business in Berkshire that operates in Newark Valley since Berkshire will not allow alcohol license, Newark Valley is benefitting from the business. Demand exceeds supply, so business is doing well. Barley crop is down locally so hard to find barley.

Bio Energy study is getting into 2nd phase, Eric Miller and staff assisting with that study. Person who was hired as lead on study left the area so Eric will either take it on or find someone else to act as lead. The 2nd phase is primarily a marketing initiative to develop a market for pellets and chips. Pellet

manufactures in Windsor, Addison, nothing locally. Wood chip supplier is Wagner for Lockheed Martin and Arnot Ogdon Hospital.

No other requests for assistance have been received. The town will be sent a letter requesting participation and given the opportunity to assign someone to the board.

Councilwoman Herrick asks if REAP could take leadership in advocating for the Post Office – Mr. Harrington is not sure, would have to look into it. Tom Reed's office is where the town should go. Lee Ann suggests contacting Reed's local representative. Supervisor Wilcox will try to contact Reid's office.

Councilman Brown, seconded by Councilwoman Cindy Herrick, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm. All approved.

Tina Thurston
Deputy Town Clerk