
RICHFORD QUARTERLY

Volume 15, Issue 3

www.richfordny.com

July – September 2015

FROM THE SUPERVISOR

The Town has been working to upgrade its technology by purchasing a new Canon Multi-function copier and a new Hewlett Packard computer with Windows 8.1. The Town also purchased the QuickBooks Pro 2015 payroll software to replace the Pro 2012 software which became obsolete on May 31. Becky Randall resigned as Custodian on May 31. Barb Keener was appointed as her temporary replacement. The highway employees have decided to join the Teamsters Union and a new agreement is being negotiated with them.

POST OFFICE IS BACK

The new Post Office Box Center, located on the north side of the Richford Diner, is now open. Besides holding all post boxes with 24 hour access, the Center also offers stamps for sale through an automated system. There is no Postal Clerk, but basic post office services are available at the Center.

LOCAL ELECTION NEWS

There will be many contested elections this November. In Richford there will be elections to fill 5 positions: Town Supervisor (2 year term); Town Clerk (2 year term); 2 Council Members (4 year term); and Superintendent of Highways (2 year term).

The October issue of this Quarterly will include candidates' statements and their qualifications for the office. The Primary Election will be held September 10, noon - 9 pm, and the General Election will be on November 3, 6 am - 9 pm.

Other local elections include Tioga County Sheriff, County Clerk, and Coroner.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

The Richford Summer Youth program will run this year from July 6th until August 14th in the Community Center. Free lunch will be offered to children from 18 months to 18 years on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from noon to one. The program will be held after lunch from 1-3 pm for children ages 5 to 16. For information call Becky Randall at 657-8254.

KIDDIES DAY

The Community Auxiliary will host Kiddies Day on July 18 from 9 am to noon at Rawley Park. Besides fun, games and great prizes, there will be the annual grand prizes of bikes supplied by the Auxiliary (available for Richford children only). For information contact Christina Craft at 607-844-8969.

RICHFORD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Ashley Kunik and Paige Streinhilber received the Richford Scholarship at graduation from Newark Valley Central School. Each recipient will receive \$200 upon enrollment in an institution of higher learning. Ashley plans to attend the Finger Lakes School of Massage and Paige will study liberal arts as TC3. The scholarship is funded each year by a chicken barbecue sponsored by the Community Auxiliary. Our congratulations to Ashley and Paige and our best wishes for a successful study year.

TOWN BOARD NEWS

May 12 - Building and Code Enforcement, and Court reports for April 2015 were presented. The board purchased an HP Computer for \$250.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that the electricity contract with American Power and Gas ends June 1. Supervisor Wilcox called one company, NYSEG, and inquired about their fixed rate. Holcomb and Miller asked if the Town accounts are listed as 'municipal' which will result in a lower rate. Supervisor Wilcox did not know. The Board agreed to not renew the service agreement with American Power and Gas and to contract with NYSEG.

Once again the Code of Ethics was discussed and tabled. The Board received the draft Code of Ethics in January 2014, and has made no progress in adopting the Code. NYS law requires that every Town have a Code of Ethics. The version provided by Holcomb in a previous meeting omitted the four key paragraphs required by NYS to be in the Town Code of Ethics. The latest version has those 4 paragraphs reinserted.

Continued discussion about what to do with the burnt house on the Hyde property. Supervisor Wilcox stated that the Attorney is working to file papers with the court for the Town to remove the house. One resident suggested to wait until the property goes up for tax sale in June, adding that if someone buys the property the Town will not have to pay for demolition. The Board indicated they preferred to work with the attorney and seek permission to demolish the house.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that the Board must have a signed agreement with the Highway Superintendent stating how the Highway budget will be spent, and what Capital projects will be completed. The Board would like to speak to Mike Hunt, the current Highway Superintendent, regarding his capital plan before signing the agreement. Councilwoman Herrick would like this to be done each year. The Board approved the 2015 highway budget estimates.

Councilwoman Herrick detailed the suggestions for improving

Rawley Park, made by the Park Committee. These include installation of walking and biking trails, expanding the usable area of the park by mowing the field south of the driveway, adding a second picnic pavilion and additional playground equipment, and providing access to the stream. Joe Kral, community member who specializes in designing park plans, suggested improvements. He has assessed the creek lookout and thinks that it can be opened up with the help of the community for little or no money. Another option is to pay to have the bank stabilized and this would involve the DEC and significant financial investment. Mr. Kral suggested that the Town get the property surveyed, and he could then design the plan for the park, as a public service, without charge to the Town. Councilwoman Herrick will write a grant to get the land surveyed in order to develop the Park Committee plan.

Becky Randall resigned as Town Hall Custodian as of May 31, 2015 due to health reasons. Barbara Keener was temporarily appointed as the Town Hall Custodian effective May 31, 2015.

Residents asked if the Town could assist them in recycling batteries and light bulbs. One resident volunteered to look into this issue and report back to the Board.

May 27 -- Special meeting to discuss the grant application for Rawley Park. The Park Committee presented a list of desired improvements and noted that the site must be surveyed before improvements are made. Local resident and surveyor Richard Thurston offered to survey the 11.43 acres for \$1,200 if the grant is approved. The Town Board agreed to submit the grant application to the Hooker Foundation for \$1,200.

June 3 - The Board discussed the Highway Employees 2015 Contract in executive session.

June 9 -- The Town Clerk's, Town Supervisor's, Highway Superintendents and Court reports for May 2015 were presented. The Code Enforcement and Dog Control reports were not presented. Highway Superintendents Mike Hunt reported that the Highway Department is currently working on grading Town roads, and \$770 was collected from scrap metal.

Planning Board Chair Charles Davis reported that the 2015 draft Comprehensive Plan Update was complete, and he presented printed copies of the Plan to each Board member. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on June 22 to receive public input and comments on the plan. Davis asked the Town Board to review the plan and invited the Board and all town residents to attend the hearing with any comments.

Charlie Davis mentioned that since the town doesn't have zoning that the Board of Appeals is not a valid board per the NYS Planning Commission. Last month the Town Board asked for information on recycling fluorescent bulbs and household batteries. Davis stated that if the town collected fluorescent light bulbs and batteries they would be considered a hazardous waste handler. This is not the town's intention and thus no further action will be taken. Fluorescent light bulbs and alkaline batteries can go into the garbage truck

Once again the Code of Ethics was discussed and tabled.

The 2015 Highway Employees Contract is still under discussion. Supervisor Wilcox met with the Teamster Representative and Highway Employee David Perry to go over the board's questions and concerns. Wilcox will request another meeting to discuss the contract.

Discussion about the Hyde Property. On June 19, 2015 the attorney will appear before the judge to plead the town's case to demolish the house.

The Town Clerk found that in 1990 a motion was made to advertise for town positions. Thus, the current openings for the Town Hall Custodian/Park Maintenance and Winter Garbage Attendant will be advertised. Before this can be done a job description for both jobs must be written.

In 2014 the Youth Program received a \$1000 grant, and spent only \$241.02. The remaining \$758.98 was placed in the Town's general fund. Barbara Keener reminded the Board that this grant money was dedicated to the Youth Program; the Board transferred the money back to the Youth Program.

Councilwomen Roberta Holcomb addressed the board as a private citizen regarding her court case against the Town of Richford and the Board of Assessment. Holcomb stated that she had not signed the agreement and wanted to be reimbursed for her attorney fees, court fees and interest; i.e., the costs she incurred in suing the Town. Supervisor Wilcox then explained the history of the case to the public, and that the final agreement did not mention payment of court fees. A resident stated that Town money should never be used to pay a resident's personal attorney fees.

Charles Davis informed the Town Board that NYS encourages all Town officials to use Town e-mail accounts for all Town business. He can set up Town e-mail addresses for all Town officials and offered to help officials integrate the Town e-mail with their personal e-mail.

SUNDAES AT THE FARM

Sundaes at the Farm will be held on Sunday August 23, 2015 at Lawton Jersey Farm 431 Bridge St. Newark Valley, New York. Enjoy free ice cream and learn about the dairy farm. A farm tour can be a fun day trip during the summer for you and your family.

POTATO FEST NEWS- SAVE THE DATE

The 23rd annual Richford Potato Festival will be held on September 19, 2015. There will be lots of potato-themed events, including ice cream, soup and of course new potato varieties. Dr. Don Halspeth from Cornell University will talk about different varieties of potatoes, and offer free samples for people to take home and try. The Historical Society will offer tours of the Graded School, with historical exhibits on display. If you have ideas or would like to help in any way for this year's festival, call Bill Sherwood 539-6283 for information.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

After almost a year of work, the Town of Richford Planning Board has completed the draft 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update. This plan includes a Town Vision and six major goals, each with detailed objectives (available at <http://richfordny.com/2015/draftcomprehensiveplan.pdf>). On June 22 the Planning Board held a public hearing to collect public input, ideas, suggestions, and feedback on the draft plan. Local residents and two of the five Town Board members attended the hearing and provided thoughtful and detailed comments that have been integrated into the current version (soon to be on the website). The Town Board has a tentative date of August 11 for the second and final public hearing on this plan, before adopting it as the official Town Comprehensive Plan. For up-to-date information about this public hearing please visit the Town website at richfordny.com.

HIGHWAY NEWS

The harsh, cold winter damaged many town roads, and frost was still coming out of some roads into early June. As soon as the frost was out, temporary repairs were made to the hardest hit sections of these roads. A permanent repair is being made on Barden Road from just north of Michaud Rd to West Hill School Road that will help disperse moisture trapped beneath the road and prevent frost penetration into the road surface. The first step is installing proper drainage down the center of the road. The next step will include installation of a layer of road fabric and a topcoat of gravel.

Other hard hit roads will be addressed as time and monies allow. We are also prepping some streets/roads for resurfacing, which should be completed early July, weather permitting.

RECYCLE YOUR USED MOTOR OIL

The Highway Department accepts used motor oil to heat the Highway Garage during the winter. Small, sealed containers of oil can be dropped off by the south entrance door of the Town Barn. Contact the Highway Department at 657-2770 to arrange for drop-off or pick-up of larger amounts, up to 55 gallons.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Fire Chief John Keener reminds residents that emergency responders need to see your house number – have it properly displayed on the front of your house or the entrance to your property (vacant lots too!). Richford residents are required to display their house number as set by the local Property Identification Law (Copies are available at the Town Clerk's office during regular office hours and on the Town website richfordny.com).

Residents can purchase reflective white on green street number signs from the Fire Department for just \$25; call John Keener at 607-972-1336. These signs meet the requirements of the local property I/D law, and will help police, ambulance and fire vehicles find your home in an emergency. Also, if you need a pool filled, contact the Fire Department at 607-657-4414.

FISH & GAME LICENSES

All NYS fish and game licenses can again be obtained at the Richford Town Clerks office during regular business hours, thanks to Town Clerk Velvet Lyke completing all the necessary training.

SUMMER TOWN CLERK HOURS

Town Clerk hours for July and August are Monday nights 5 – 7 pm, Wednesday mornings 8 – 11 am, and on Tuesday August 11 from 7 – 9 pm. The Town Clerk's office will be closed August 22 – 29.

RAWLEY PARK COMMITTEE NEWS

In May, the Town of Richford applied for and received a grant from the Hooker Foundation. The grant will be used to pay for a site survey of the park and adjacent town-owned lands so that concrete, detailed planning for the future of Rawley Park can begin. While we wait for the survey to be completed, we are starting work on clearing brush from the top of the creek bank – watch for flyers and notices on the town website richfordny.com about work parties! A citizen has pledged to purchase a memorial bench for the creek side. Another citizen has pledged to build a sign with planters for the entrance to the park for the price of materials. The local Daisy Girl Scout troop has offered to adopt the care of the planters. The Town has voted to maintain any improvements that occur.

The park is a great community resource and we have a lot of ideas for making it even more beautiful and useful. We'd love to have any interested townspeople join the committee – we have a lot of planning, working, and grant writing to do! We also want to know what other ideas other people might have, so we're preparing an opinion survey. We'll be giving it out at lots of venues, but we don't have a budget for postage, so please contact us at friendsofrawleypark@richfordny.com or call Joe Kral at (585) 322-3232 if you'd like a copy and don't get one or if you'd like to join our committee.

LIBRARY NEWS

Children 5 – 12 years old are invited to hear stories of local heroes during the Berkshire Free Library's Summer Reading Program held Thursdays July 16, 23 and 30 from 10 am to noon at the library. The program will also be presented at the Richford Summer Program.

A free family program featuring "PopArt" artist Michael Albert will be held Tuesday July 21 from 10 am – noon at the Berkshire Fire Station. Also, on August 15 from 1 to 4 p.m. there will be a "Game Truck" event - Come and try out electronic games.

Independent Reading for prizes will run all summer at the Library and at the Richford Summer Program. Story Time for young children and their parent or caregiver will resume in the fall in Richford. Technology classes will begin soon – come and learn about computers, tablets, e-readers and smartphones.

Fold 2

Calendar of Events

July and August Richford Summer Youth Program, Mon, Wed, Fri, 12 – 3 pm. Free lunch available. Community Hall. For information call 657- 8254.

July 18 Kiddies Day, 9 am, Rawley Park\.

July 21 Family Fun activity (free) at Berkshire Fire Station, 10 to noon, Michael Albert, “PopArt Artist”.

July 25 Blueberry and Books Festival, 9 to 5, Berkshire Library, Fire Station, and Community Hall

Aug 6 Free Food, with the Mobile Food Pantry Food Distribution, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. Richford Congregational Church, bring boxes, bags.

Aug 11 Tentative public hearing for the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update, 6:30 pm, Town Hall, Bowery Lane. Verify meeting date on Town website richfordny.com

Aug 15 Family Fun activity (free), “Game Truck”, 1 to 4 p.m., Berkshire Fire Station

Aug 20 Pie and Ice Cream Social, 6p.m., Berkshire Fire Station, fund raiser for Library

Aug 23 Sundaes on the Farm, 12 noon on. Lawtons’ Jersey Farm, 431 Bridge St., off Route 38. Free ice cream and opportunity to visit dairy farm operation

Sept 3 Mobile Food Pantry, see August 6

Sept 19 Potato Festival, Graded School, All Day.

Please check town website, www.richfordny.com , for additional programs and news occurring after the newsletter.

Fold 1

FREE BIKE HELMETS

On July 22nd, free bicycle helmets will be handed out to community members. This event will be held from 1-2 pm at the community hall and is open to everyone in Richford. Children and adult helmets will be available to anyone interested. The only requirement is that all recipients must come in person to be fitted. This is to ensure that helmets fit properly. For more information contact Becky Randall at 657-8254.

BLUEBERRY AND BOOKS FESTIVAL

The Berkshire Free Library will hold an all-day festival with food, entertainment and prizes on July 25, from 9 am to 5 pm, rain or shine, at the Library, Community Hall and Fire Station. There will be blueberry pancakes or crepes, raffles, a craft fair, book sale, trash and treasure sale, an old car display, and a Chicken BBQ by the Fire Department. The Pie and Ice Cream Social will be held at the Berkshire Fire Station on August 20, at 6 pm. Come and help support the Library.