
RICHFORD QUARTERLY

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April – June 2017

FROM THE SUPERVISOR

Winter storm “Stella” reminded us that Mother Nature can and does demand that we be as prepared as possible for the next weather event. Though we were just outside of the hardest hit area of the storm, the 20+ inches of snow we received did offer a challenge for all of us. Our highway crew was diligent throughout the storm and the ensuing cleanup, getting our town roads back to passable as quickly as possible. Thanks go out to our highway crew, job well done. As we anticipate the arrival of spring, many of your thoughts turn to spring cleanup. At the writing of this newsletter, we are working on a tire collection day that includes scrap metal drop off also. The details of this program will be announced after the April Town Board meeting with details posted at the town hall and flyers available at the solid waste drop-off area (the garbage truck). Tioga County has just added electronic waste recycling within Tioga County. Tioga County Residents can recycle their old electronics at the Taylor Garbage Transfer Station at 352 Glen Mary Drive, Owego. Go to <https://www.tiogacountyny.com/programs-agencies/recycling/> for times and details. Other spring projects that are in the works include installation of the new playground equipment and security cameras as well as other repair projects at Rawley Park. I will continue to be at the Town Hall, every Wednesday from 9 – 11 a.m. See you around town, Charlie Davis.

GRIEVANCE DAY

Grievance Day will be held Tuesday, May 23 from 4 - 8 pm at the Town Hall, Bowery Lane, Richford. Grievance Day gives property owners the opportunity to discuss and seek relief for their property assessments with Board of Review members Flora Karasin, Steve Kotula and Donald Lyke. Property owners whose assessments were changed have been notified directly by mail.

New York State law requires that any changes in the property assessment after the tentative roll has been filed must be made by the Board of Assessment Review and NOT by the Assessor. By law, Assessor Frances Butler must attend the meeting but she is not a member of the Board of Assessment Review. Copies of the required assessment complaint form will be available at the meeting. Copies can also be obtained from the Assessor by e-mail Town.assessor@gmail.com, phone (849-6966) or mail: PO Box 366, Marathon, NY 132803. Also, copies can be obtained from the County Real Property Tax Office, 56 Main St., Owego; the NYS website www.orps.state.ny.us; and the Richford website www.richfordny.com.

On or about May 1st the tentative Assessment Roll Book will be filed by the Assessor at the Town Clerk's Office. Local residents can view this at the Town Hall during the Clerk's regular hours, on the Town website, and at the Assessor's office.

TOWN ELECTIONS

It's not too early to plan for the upcoming (November) elections. Four positions will be up for a vote this year: Town Supervisor (2 year term) two Town Board members (4 year terms) and Highway Superintendent (4 year term). If you would like to run for any of these positions, be sure to file your petition in time. Petitions for Democratic and Republican candidates signatures may be collected beginning June 6 and must be filed by July 10, while Independent candidates may collect signatures after July 11 and must file by August 15.

If you want to learn about campaign finance, there is a free event on May 17th from 9 am-noon, at 56 Main St., Owego, at the Hubbard Auditorium. A representative from New York State will be there to explain how campaign finance works and answer any questions. For more information contact the Board of Elections, 1062 State Route 38, PO Box 306, Owego 13827, tiogacountyny.com/departments/board-of-elections.html or phone [607-687-8261](tel:607-687-8261).

NEW TOWN CLERK HOURS

Town Clerk hours are now Tuesday evenings 5 – 7 pm, and Wednesday mornings 8 – 11 am.

BURN BAN IN EFFECT

The annual NYS statewide ban on open burning is in effect March 16 through May 14 2017. Open fires are any outdoor fire in which smoke is emitted directly into the air, including burning in barrels. Open burning is the largest single cause of wildfires in New York State, and the spring burn ban has resulted in 35% fewer wildfires over the past 8 years. The regulation prohibits open burning (even in barrels) during early spring and prohibits burning garbage at all times. Open burning of household trash releases dangerous compounds including arsenic, carbon monoxide, benzene, styrene, formaldehyde, lead, hydrogen cyanide, and dioxin, among others. Protect yourself and your communities – recycle or dispose of trash safely and properly.

Violators of the open burning state regulation are subject to both criminal and civil enforcement actions, with the minimum fine of \$500 for a first offense. To report environmental law violations call 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332), or report on line on DEC's website. Information is available on DEC's website.

TOWN BOARD NEWS

Jan 10 – The Town Board spent the first hour on start-of-the-year business: appointing elected and nonelected officials; acknowledging contractual services with Town Attorney, Code Enforcement Officer, Dog Control Officer etc.; setting rental rates for Town facilities; travel policies for Town employees and officials; and similar administrative actions.

Highway Superintendent Mike Hunt reported the Labor Department made a surprise inspection of the Highway Barn; the eye wash station needed repair, and some policies and procedures related to Training needed posting and updating.

Code Enforcement Officer Kevin McMahon reported that in 2016 he issued 23 building permits with estimated construction costs of \$880,800. Justice report included a check for \$1,753.

Continued discussion about EMS service. The board will meet with Maine EMS to discuss a contract. Also discussion about meeting with Bangs Ambulance of Ithaca (which is closer than Maine) as an alternative EMS service

Supervisor Davis reported that the 2014 AUD (NYS required annual financial statement) had been submitted, and work was continuing on the 2015 and 2016 reports.

The Board went into Executive Session to discuss Holcomb vs. Town of Richford. The lawsuit was initiated in 2013 by Roberta Holcomb to contest her tax assessment. The Town will be bound by the agreement.

Jan 17 – A special joint Town Board and Planning Board meeting to discuss updating the 2003 Town Subdivision Law.

Feb 14 - Highway Superintendent Mike Hunt reported the highway crew is busy plowing roads and repairing equipment. The Labor Department has not yet responded or conducted a reinspection of the Highway Garage violations (reported last month). Justice Report included a check for \$3,155. Code Enforcement Officer Kevin McMahon reported 2 building permits issued for construction costs of \$215,000. Davis stated that the Town's 2015 AUD has been completed.

Discussion about EMS service. Attorney Canizio will arrange a meeting with Maine EMS to discuss a contract. Councilman Miller will speak to Bangs Ambulance and Supervisor Davis will contact Harford and Dryden about their EMS providers.

The Board went into Executive Session to discuss a Human Resource Issue and Holcomb vs. Town of Richford. The Board voted to remove a Highway Employee for being absent for 365 days in accordance with Section 73 of the Civil Service Law. The Board also voted to sign the settlement agreement for Holcomb vs. Town of Richford.

Mar 21 – The Board thanked Highway Superintendent Mike Hunt and crew for keeping the roads plowed and safe during and after the massive snow last week. Hunt reported he will meet with the County about FEMA money.

Justice Report included a check for \$2,134. Dog Control Officer Ron Raab reported that NYS gave Stray Haven a negative rating for inadequate record keeping of dogs, not meeting the appropriate redemption period, dogs remitted without licensing and not having contracts with local municipalities. The Town currently contracts with Stray Haven.

Code Enforcement Officer Kevin McMahon reported that he had a rating drop from 5 to 4 for the Town of Richford. He is awaiting an explanation for that rating drop, as he got a 5 for the Town of Caroline and all reports and records are done the same for both towns. The Board signed a contract for Code Enforcement for \$9,486, a 2% raise for McMahon. The Town has a FOIL request regarding Code Enforcement information.

Councilman Miller reported Mr. Bangs of Bangs Ambulance suggested we speak to Tompkins County and possibly create a district with neighboring towns. A district would allow getting tax funds to pay for EMS coverage. Councilman Thayer spoke to Broome Volunteer and recommended that the town take back the Certificate of Need from Maine and contact the Tioga Dispatcher to dispatch the closest available ambulance. Town of Richford had 60 calls in 2016.

The Board discussed recycling and tire disposal. Weitsman's has donated money to the County for recycling of tires. Dates will be set at the next meeting.

Davis announced a meeting on March 28th at 6pm to discuss what to do with the recently purchased Town building. The Town Board would like two volunteers from the public and everyone is welcome to attend this meeting. If you are interested in being on the committee contact Supervisor Davis.

Discussion about the Graded School House. The Town of Richford owns the Graded Schoolhouse. The Board would like to sign it over to the Historical Society, which will then be responsible for maintenance and costs, but this can't be done until the Historical Society's 501c3 paper work is updated.

NTNN NEWS

Northern Tioga Neighbors Network serves residents of Richford, Berkshire and Newark Valley. For those without transportation it provides rides to medical appointments, the grocery store, pharmacy, and more. If you need transportation or would like to help those who do call our phone numbers: [607-657-2823](tel:607-657-2823), or (Toll Free) [877-657-2823](tel:877-657-2823). Leave a message on our answering machine and we will get back to you within 24 hours for details during regular business hours.

EXERCISE CLASS

A low-impact spring exercise class, "Balance, Body Alignment and Posture", for adults 50 and over, sponsored by Northern Tioga Neighbors Network (NTNN), is held Tuesday mornings from now through May 16 from 10 to 11:30 am in the Richford Town Hall. Registration is just \$10 for the series, you can start anytime, and there are prizes for participants.

FRIENDS OF RAWLEY PARK UPDATE

Rawley Park can only be seen from the road now, but it won't be long before it will be bustling with activity! The Friends of Rawley Park (FORP) is coming out of winter hibernation and is ready to start planning work parties and set future plans for the park. The 2017 kick-off meeting was held on March 28. More meetings will occur on various Tuesday's at 7:15pm at the Town Hall, throughout the spring and summer. With four grants in-hand, we have playground equipment and a security system waiting to be installed, paint for the pavilion and funds to fix the restrooms. Please join us- we need support from our wonderful community to make it all happen! The first community event at the park this year is the Community Auxiliary's Easter egg hunt for Richford residents, to be held on April 15. Also, if you would like to rent the pavilion throughout the summer, please contact Barb Keener at 242-1754. Plan ahead- the rental schedule fills up quickly! If you want more information on the great happenings in the park or would like to be part of the Friends of Rawley committee, please call Vicki Davis at [607-657-8248](tel:607-657-8248) or email vdavis@cornell.edu.

FREE HOME REPAIRS

Both labor and materials are free to qualifying households. Projects may include building porches, interior and exterior painting, installing new mobile home skirting, and constructing wheelchair ramps, and with other 'light' construction projects. Co-sponsor Tioga Opportunities, Inc. is currently accepting confidential applications from homeowners. This is a first-come first awarded program. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 15 !

To learn how your home may be considered, contact Steve Wentworth, Tioga Opportunities Rehabilitation Specialist, at 607-687-0707, or email at swentworth@tiogaopp.org (write 2017 GWC in the subject line). Download applications can at: <http://tiogaopp.org/services/housing-services.html>.

Workcamps are intensive one-week trips aimed at helping individuals grow in a faith-based environment through service. Young people and their adult leaders come from across the country to spend a week in our community performing hands - on home-repair projects for elderly, low - income, and disabled families. This year's camp will take place July 10-14.

RICHFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

At its 2 PM April 10 meeting the Richford Historical Society will begin discussing the Cornell University Design Connect's recommendations for the Graded School. The meeting will be at the Richford Congregational Church and is open to all.

RICHFORD COMMUNITY AUXILIARY

The Auxiliary now has a bounce house available for rental this spring and summer. What a great way to celebrate a kid's birthday or to kick off a family reunion! The fee for rental will be at the bargain price of \$100 for a weekend! April 15th from 10am to noon will be the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Rawley Park. There is no fee to attend but families are asked to bring a bag of candy.

May 13th, the Auxiliary will be holding their Annual Scholarship BBQ to benefit one boy and one girl from Richford. Donations of beans, charcoal, oil, vinegar, soda, water and money are being accepted. This is a wonderful way to show the kids of Richford your support! Contact Chris Craft at 844-8969 or Andrea Baker at 539-7069 if you have any questions or would like to make a donation.

RICHFORD RAMBLINGS

Winter is hopefully behind us and it's safe to say many will remember "The Blizzard Of 2017." The town employees that were responsible for keeping us safe on the roads should be commended for the hard work put into those days before, during and after. Thanks to all the Highway crew!

The local Girl Scout Troop has been hard at work selling those cookies we all know and love. This year Scouts have been spotted at the Richford Tasty Treat doing a drive thru cookie booth on some of the coldest weekends of the season! The cookie sales benefit each troop directly providing funds for summer camp, life skills lessons and teaching valuable leadership skills. The Girl Scouts have also used the funds raised to improve our community such as completing projects in the Community Hall, Rawley Park and provided babysitting services for a Parent's Night out. Darah, Joslyn and Piper have made a video to submit for a contest in hopes to win funding for a bike/walking path at Rawley Park. The Juniors in the group helped New Hope Center in Owego build shelves, sewed pillowcases and made an art piece for the residence. Way to go girls! Keep up the great work and don't forget community members that your support is invaluable to these young ladies.

The Richford Congregational Church hosts regular quilting groups that all community members are invited to join. One group meets every Monday from 10 am to 2 pm and is led by Heather Armstrong, and a second group meets the 3rd Saturday of each month from 9:30 am-2:30 pm and is led by Peggy Anderson. The groups may work on the same quilt patterns or they may work on individual projects. Previous projects include sewing pillowcase dresses for girls in Haiti, walker bags, lap quilts, shawls for Riverview residents and quilts for families who have lost their homes in a fire. If you would like to join but don't have supplies, machines, fabric and various supplies are available at the meetings. For more information contact The Richford Congregational Church at 657-2592 or pop into a scheduled class! This is a wonderful way to connect with fellow community members.

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Calendar of Events

- Apr 6 Mobile Food Pantry, Richford Congregational Church, Route 38, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. bring bags, boxes
- Apr 11 Cornell Cooperative Extension Seed Starting Workshop 6pm-7:30pm, Tioga Gardens, Owego. Contact Barb Neal 607-687-4020 ext. 304
- Apr 12 “Alzheimer’s: Memory loss and dementia: The basics” 5-6 pm at the Berkshire Library. Call 657-4418 for information
- Apr 15 Auxiliary Easter Egg Hunt at Rawley Park, 10am to noon
- Apr 15 Richford Fire Department Chicken BBQ, 11am ‘til gone. Chicken sold as a whole meal or ½ of a chicken.
- Apr 27 Lourdes Mammogram Van at Clinic, doctor’s order needed
- May 3 Water resource protection meeting, 7pm, Town Hall
- May 4 Mobile Food Pantry Truck, see Apr 6
- May 6 Richford Congregational Church Dinner

- May 6 Berkshire Ladies Auxiliary Craft Fair & Bake Sale 9am-2pm, Berkshire Fire Station. A few tables are still available, call Denise @ 760-1361 to rent one.
- May 13 Richford Community Auxiliary Scholarship Chicken BBQ, 11am til gone.
- May 20 Richford Fire Department Chicken BBQ, 11am ‘til gone.
- May 24 Lourdes Mammogram Van at Clinic, doctor’s order needed.
- June 1 Mobile food pantry truck, see Apr 6
- June 29 Lourdes Mammogram Van at Clinic, doctor’s order needed
- *** Story Hour, 10-11am every Tuesday for all pre-schoolers and their parents, grandparents, or caregivers, at the Berkshire Free Library. Call 657-4418 for details.
- *** Burn Ban continues until May 27th
- Please check town website, www.richfordny.com, for additional programs and news occurring after the newsletter.

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WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

Steven Winkley, New York Rural Water Association Hydrogeologist and Protection Specialist, will describe his services to assess and protect the Town of Richford’s water supplies on May 3 at 7 pm in the Richford Town Hall. This project will take approximately one year and is offered to the Town at no charge. Richford and Berkshire Town Boards both requested his services. The regular Richford Planning Board meeting will begin at 6 pm. The Planning Board meetings are open to the public and that includes Mr. Winkley’s presentation.

RABIES CLINIC

The Rabies Clinic will be held Thursday, May 18, 6 – 8 pm at the Newark Valley Fire Station, 7151 State Route 38. Protect your pets from this terrible disease. All pets should be vaccinated at 3 months, with a booster at one year and then every 3 years.

A \$10 donation is requested per animal but no pet will be turned away because of inability to pay. Pets must be under control with dogs on a leash and cats either on a leash or boxed. For more information call the Health Dept. at 687-8600 and ask for Environmental Health. Electronic sign-up is strongly encouraged for faster service: www.health.ny.gov/go2clinic/54