
RICHFORD QUARTERLY

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April - June 2009

SUPERVISOR'S NOTES BY: MARTIN WILCOX

In order to receive specific state aid, the Town must keep its real assessment above 92% of real value based on current sales within the town. New York State helps offset the cost of updating assessments by providing the Town \$5.00 a parcel for this annual update. This year Richford received \$4,312 in reassessment aid from the State.

You may be aware that since January a citizens committee has been meeting to work on plans for possibly constructing a multipurpose municipal building, integrating the highway garage, community building, and possibly the fire house.

The highway garage was built in 1962 when the Town drove single-axle trucks. Now the highway crew drives larger tandem-axle trucks, which leaves less work area around each unit, and infringes on a break area for the men.

The community building was built in 1948, and at one time both parts could be used for community events. The smaller section is now used exclusively by the Town Court although it is not really suitable for a courtroom. The larger section now includes a furnace room and Town Clerk's office, and there is less room for public events. Officials now have to work out of their homes due to lack of office space.

Both buildings were built before modern codes dealing with energy use and handicap accessibility were adopted. At the March Town Board meeting I informed the Board members that Richford needs to begin the process of replacing our buildings and finding a suitable location for new facilities. This will enable the Town to operate more efficiently and provide access and services that the Town can't currently provide due to space restrictions.

FIRE COMMISSIONERS BY: APRIL ANDERSEN

The Building Committee is working hard at finding an appropriate site within the town limits for a new Fire Station/Municipal Building. We are still meeting monthly at the fire station. The next meeting is April 27th at 6:30 PM. If people have questions, concerns or would like to become involved, please contact April Andersen at 657-2575.

The fire commissioners have been working on small renovations to spruce up the fire station. We have also completed our yearly audit for the state. We are currently looking for one additional commissioner. If you are interested, or have comments, questions or concerns, please contact Jeff Holcomb at 657-8176.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

BY: FRANCES BUTLER

Assessments have increased town wide approximately 5% as a result of the Town's Annual Reassessment Program. This program was initiated in 2008 and its goal is to maintain the Town's valuation at 100% market value. Assessments were not increased in 2008, but because selling prices continue to occur above assessments, an increase this year is necessary. Property owners should realize that an increased assessment does not necessarily mean an increase in taxes. Although every parcel was increased 5%, tax bills will remain the same as last year *if* the Town, County, and School budgets are held to last year's level. Any increase in these budgets will increase your taxes. It is the responsibility of every taxpayer to get involved in the budget process, attend budget hearings, and hold these Boards responsible for spending taxpayer money.

GRIEVANCE DAY

Grievance Day will be held Tuesday, May 26, 2009, at the Town Hall, Bowery Lane, Richford, from 4 to 8 p.m. Grievance Day gives local property owners the opportunity to discuss their tax assessments with Assessor Frances Butler and Board of Review members Flora Karasin, Ken Miller, and Annamarie Morse. Property owners whose assessments have been changed are notified directly by mail.

The meeting with the Board of Assessment Review is by appointment only. Call Mrs. Butler at 849-6380 to arrange for a time and also to obtain a copy of the required assessment complaint form. Forms can also be obtained from the County Real Property Tax Office, Owego or from the New York website: www.orps.state.ny.us. Copies of the complaint form will also be available on May 26th, but the process is easier if the form is filled out ahead of time.

The tentative assessment roll will be filed with the Town Clerk, Richford, and with the Tioga County Property Tax Service Office, (16 Court St., Owego, NY, phone: 687-8661) on or about May 1st. The assessment roll book can be examined locally at the Town Clerk's Office, during the Clerk's business hours, or at the Owego office.

New York State law requires that any changes in property assessment after the tentative roll has been filed must be made by the Board of Assessment Review and NOT by the Assessor.

TOWN BOARD NEWS

February 10, 2009 – Highway Superintendent, Steve Lawton, reports that the highway crew is hauling sand and cinders and repairing equipment. Code Enforcement and dog control reports were given. The Justice Court report for January was given and \$4,035 was collected from fines. The Planning Board will be working on a proposed road protection ordinance. There was discussion about the Berkshire EMS. Victoria Nuzzo was appointed to serve as Chairman of the Planning Board. The DEC reports that they are using herbicides off of Sears Road. Resident Rolf Wittich asked the Board to look into a possible moratorium on the siting of wind turbines until parameters are set and met, and to consider asking the County Legislature to put a cap on the sales tax on fuel oil. He also feels that the senior exemption for town property taxes should be the same as for the county. Richard Harrington reported on the Resource Development Team of the Newark Valley Central School District, and on the Tioga Opportunities. Charles Davis of the Planning Board stated that he thinks attendance at a computer class should be acceptable towards the required 4 hours of training for Planning Board members.

March 10, 2009 – April Andersen gave a report on the meetings of the Building Committee, which is looking into the building of a new Community Center, Fire Station and Highway Garage. There was much discussion and the Board feels that they are heading in the right direction. Highway Superintendent, Steve Lawton, reports that the crew continues to haul sand and cinders and to repair machinery in anticipation of spring weather. Planning Board member, Charles Davis, reports that they will begin work on a proposed road protection ordinance. The Planning Board is also working on trying to get a Town website up and running and they have plans to be updating the Comprehensive Plan. Code Enforcement and dog control reports were given. A Justice Court report was given and \$6,130 was collected in fines. There was more discussing about the Berkshire EMS. Martin Wilcox reports that the basic rate of Haeefe TV Cable will increase in April to \$45.95. Mr. Wilcox also stated that the Board should start setting aside a reserve fund for the purpose of constructing a new Community Center and Highway Garage even if the Fire Station is not included. Mr. Wilcox reported that the current Fire Station was built in 1946, the Community Center in 1948 and the Highway Garage in 1962. Fran Butler, Town Assessor, reports that if she does nothing with the assessment our equalization rate will be at 92%. She proposes to do a 5% assessment increase for all properties. Next year, she proposes to look at each property, especially vacant land, before reassessing.

April 14, 2009 – John Keener, reporting for the Highway Department, says the crew has been installing drain pipes and maintaining equipment. Martin Wilcox recommended some repair and maintenance work be done in Rawley Park. Nancy Paul would like to see something done to prevent bees from

building nests in the playground equipment at the park. Code Enforcement and dog control reports were given. The Justice Court report was given and \$3,155 was collected in fines. Victoria Nuzzo, Chair of the Planning Board, explained that a road preservation law was necessary to protect the town roads if gas wells will be drilled in our town. She asked about the status of the junk law, and said questions have been asked about places that still have junk. Such complaints should be directed to the Code Enforcement Officer, John Daniels. Tioga County is working on a road preservation law to cover all the towns in the county. There will be meetings for the towns to get together and have input in this process. Martin Wilcox reports that the Board needs to find a new garbage truck attendant due to the illness of our current attendant. An ad will be put in the paper. Tire Collection Day will be May 16th. The Highway Department will be seeking bids for a used grader. An ad will be put in the paper for this.

RABIES CLINICS

Tioga County's 2009 Spring Rabies Clinics, sponsored by the Tioga County Environmental Health Department, will be held in the following towns in May:

Town of Berkshire - May 1, 6-7 p.m, Berkshire Fire Station (*with Dr. West*)

Town of Newark Valley - May 15, 6-7 p.m, Newark Valley Fire Station, Rt. 38 (*with Dr. West*)

Vaccine will not be administered unless pets are under control and accompanied by a responsible adult. Dogs must be on a leash and cats either leashed or boxed. You must also show proof of previous vaccination and lack of this will result in the shot being considered a first time vaccination for the animal and effective for a one year period. All other vaccinations are effective for a three year period.

TIOGA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In May there will be a United Way Art Show featuring artwork from students from grades 6-12. Beginning June 27 the museum will feature a Log Cabin Quilt Show. The museum is located at 110 Front St. in Owego and is open Tuesday-Saturday 10AM to 4PM.

T.A.L.L. (Tioga Adult Learning Lab)

The Literacy Volunteers of Broome/Tioga Counties, Inc. offers FREE computer classes for adults at Owego Free Academy. For more information on computer classes or any adult learning opportunities, contact Literacy Volunteers at 607-748-5478, or go to the web at www.broometiogaliteracy.com

Northern Tioga Neighbors Network (NTNN)

website: www.ntnnonline.org

Trained volunteers continue to be available to assist local residents in Richford and Berkshire who need transportation for medical services and grocery shopping. Other services such as friendly phone call visits or home visits can also be provided as well as letter writing or mail pickups.

Call 657-2823 or 1-877-657-2823 to request the services of a volunteer. Phone calls will be returned in one business day. NTNN is not an emergency service; they do not provide medical or weekend services.

Capable and available volunteers are the backbone of this service; if you are interested in becoming a volunteer or want more information, please call the above number and indicate your interest. All prospective volunteers undergo a short training program before providing any services.

Another way of supporting this service is through a donation. Donations are tax deductible and can be made payable to Northern Tioga Neighbors Network, P.O. Box 93, Richford, NY 13835.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM AND FREE LUNCH

Summer Youth Program Director, Becky Randall, has been busy making plans for the youth program, which will start Monday, July 6, and end Wednesday, August 12. Craft and other programs are in the plans, including the Magic Gardener and David Crance, from Tioga County Cooperative Extension. New books from the Berkshire Library will also be available. The activity programs are scheduled from 1 to 3 p.m. Mon. & Wed. afternoons at the Town Hall, Bowery Lane.

The free lunch program, provided by the Summer Food Service Program, Owego Apalachin Central School District, will be available FIVE days a week, starting July 6 and ending August 14. Lunches are available from 12 noon to 1 p.m. for children, age 18 months through 18 years of age, whose families meet certain income guidelines.

Youth can participate in one or both programs. For more information about the program and to sign up, contact Director Randall at 657-8254.

COUNTY RESOURCE FAMILY PLANNING

Information about the variety of services available from this agency (under the Tioga Opportunities Program umbrella) can be obtained by calling 687-5333. Services are low cost, confidential, and available during evening hours and on Saturday. The agency is located at 110 Central Ave, Owego, which is also the site of the WIC Program.

COMMUNITY AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES

The Community Auxiliary sponsors a yearly chicken barbecue to raise the \$300 needed for the Richford Scholarship. This scholarship is presented to a graduating boy and girl from Richford. The barbecue will be held at the Fire Station, Bowery Lane, from 12 noon till gone, on May 9. \$7.00 for the meal; \$5.50 for half chicken.

Andrea Baker will be calling residents for the food and other needed donations for the barbecue. Monetary contributions for the fund would also be appreciated and can be sent to Florence Brooks, Treasurer, 5 Perry Road, Richford, NY 13835.

Events planned for early summer include a DJ Cookout at the Park on June 13. Check local bulletin boards for information.

Saturday July 11 will be the annual Kiddies Day, to be held this year at the Town (Community) Hall, Bowery Lane, from 9 to 12 noon. Registration will be from 9 to 10 a.m., 10 to 12 noon games and other activities. Refreshments will be available. Bicycles will be awarded to a boy and girl, in each of the following age groups: 0 -3, 4 - 7, 8 - 12, and 13 - 16. A total of 8 bicycles will be awarded. A boy and girl, ages 4 - 7, will be selected as king and queen.

Information about the Auxiliary and its activities can be obtained from chair Chris Craft, 844-8969.

DOG CONTROL OFFICER'S NOTES

BY: RONALD RAAB (607) 426-4567

All dogs must have a license and a rabies vaccination. Be sure the license is on your dog's collar; if your dog is lost and I find him, I can return the dog to you at no charge, as long as there is a license. Without a license, I will have to take the dog to Stray Haven Humane Society in Waverly, NY, for safe keeping. Stray Haven will give your dog a rabies shot, food and water, determine any health needs, and file all the required paperwork. This keeps a lost dog safe, but Stray Haven will ask to have the costs reimbursed before it can return your dog. Please be responsible, and license and tag your dog.

TIOGA RECYCLES

The Barton Transfer Station has a number of recycling programs, including Tire Disposal, Freon Removal, Curbside Recycling Program, and Household Hazardous Waste Program. The Hazardous Waste Collection Facility at the Broome County Nanticoke Landfill can dispose of hazardous waste. There is no charge to use this facility, but first, go to WWW.TiogaCountyNY.com to find a list of materials that are acceptable and not acceptable, and *details on how to recycle hazardous waste* (such as tv's, paint, pesticides, batteries, computers, etc).

For more information contact Ellen Pratt, Manager (565-8130 or 800-927-2323; pratte@co.tioga.ny.us) at Solid Waste, 1216 Route 17C, Barton, NY 13734. Hours: Tues & Thurs., 8am – 6 pm.

COUNTY WELLNESS DAY

WOW (Working on Wellness) Day, sponsored by the Tioga County Health Department, will be held Thursday, May 14, at the Owego United Methodist Church, 261 Main St., from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event will include local organizations and agencies providing educational displays and information about various health topics and free health screenings. Come and attend for snacks, incentives, educational information and prizes. For more information, contact Tina Slavic, 687-8574/8607.

TIRE COLLECTION DAY

Richford residents can bring old tires to the Town Highway Garage (Route 79 east) on Saturday, May 16, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The fees to help cover costs:

17" or smaller (auto type):	\$1.00
Auto tires, tires w/rims, or truck tires 15 - 19" or with rims:	\$3.00
20" and larger but, less than 100 lbs:	\$6.00
100 lbs. and larger \$6.00 + an additional .05 per lb. (for example: \$7.25 for a 125 lb. tire).	

HEAD START

Head Start of Tioga Opportunities, Inc. is a full day, four-day a week preschool program for children ages 3 to 4. This is offered at no cost to income eligible families, at their Newark Valley classroom located at 117 Whig Street. Breakfast, lunch and snacks, along with transportation for 4 years old are included in the program, Tioga Opportunities also offers a ½ day, 5-day a week, Pre-K program at the Nathan T. Hall Elementary School. For more information on either program, contact Elaine Lovegreen or Freedom Carrigan at 607-687-5888 or toll free at 1-866-687-5888.

This newsletter is written by the Richford Planning Board. If you have questions please call Emilie Stuhlmiller at 657-2680.

Calendar of Events

- May 1 Rabies Clinic, 6-7 p.m., Berkshire Fire Station
- May 2 Smorgasbord Dinner, 4-7 p.m., Richford Congregational Church, Rt 38, adults \$8.00, children 5-12, \$4.00, 4 and under free
- May 2 Highland Cemetery Assoc'n Meeting, 7 p.m., Town Hall
- May 7 Free food giveaway, Richford Congregational Church, 12:30 p.m. till gone; bring boxes.
- May 9 Scholarship Chicken Barbecue, Community Auxiliary, Fire Station, Bowery Lane, 12 noon till gone
- May 14 Work on Wellness Day, Methodist Church, Owego, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- May 15 Rabies Clinic, 6 - 7 p.m. Fire Station, Newark Valley.
- May 16 Tire Collection Day, Town Highway Garage, (Rt. 79 east) 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
- May 20 Northern Tioga Neighbors Network Advisory Board meeting, 7 p.m., Hubbard Center.
- May 26 Grievance Day, Town Hall, 4 - 8 p.m., call Assessor (849-6380) for appointment.
- May 26 Diabetic Support Group, 6 p.m., Congregational Church, Berkshire, call Ruth @ 657-4479, for info.
- June 4 Free food giveaway, see May 7
- June 13 DJ Cookout, Community Auxiliary, Rawley Park, watch for publicity postings around Town.
- June 17 Northern Tioga Neighbors Network, see May 20
- June 30 Diabetic Support Group, 6 p.m. see May 26
- July 2 Free food giveaway, see May 7
- July 6 Summer Youth and Lunch Programs start
- July 11 Kiddies Day, Town Hall, 9 a.m. - noon, sponsored by Community Auxiliary

Town Newsletter
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