

OXFORD TOWN BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, October 8, 2014
Town & Village Hall

The Monthly Meeting of the Oxford Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Lawrence Wilcox at 7:30 pm at the Village Hall for the transaction of such business that may lawfully come before the Board. The meeting opened with the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Present were:

Supervisor: Lawrence Wilcox
Council: Jerry Locke
 Alan Davis
 Ron Charles
 John Hofmann

Town Clerk: James W. Hemstrought Jr.

Highway Superintendent:

Absent: Timothy Tefft, Hwy. Superintendent

Others Present: Paul Romahn, Planning Board Representative. Also residents who spoke: John Knapp, David Davis, Mina Takahashi and Bruce Leonard.

Minutes Previous Monthly Meeting:

Alan Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of September 10, 2014 as amended. Motion was seconded by John Hofmann and carried with 5 Ayes.

Supervisor's Monthly Report:

Supervisor Wilcox handed out the Financial Accounting Information Sheets, Investment and Certificate of Deposit Reports, as of September 30, 2014. He also gave the following Revenues, Appropriations and Checkbook Balances:

September 2014

Revenues	\$216,327.77
Appropriations	41,609.34

Check Book Balances:

General	\$ 66,782.34
Highway	164,962.45
T&A	5,869.83
Water District #1	1,331.94

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Supervisor Wilcox opened the meeting for public comments.

John Knapp read the following letter, to be included in these minutes:

On August 13, the residents of Oxford filled the American Legion to comment on the proposed changes to the zoning ordinances. While a variety of valid issues were raised, the vast majority spoke about the grave dangers of both high volume hydraulic fracturing and the use of "Material Staging Areas". All who spoke received applause from the entire group, showing an exceptional level of support among those gathered. Not one person spoke in favor of allowing either of those two uses in our town. Mr. Wilcox thanked us all for our input and promised to address these concerns at the next board meeting.

At that board meeting, held September 10, only one of the issues addressed at the public hearing was even mentioned. That issue involved formulating a procedure for the town planning board to follow in issuing permits. Why were the issues of major concern to the overwhelming majority of residents not addressed? Will they be addressed tonight? Will they be addressed before making any changes to the ordinance?

On September 16, the town planning board met and discussed the procedure for the permitting of drilling and material staging areas. After that, they discussed the filing of the required "Short Environmental Assessment Form". With all due respect to the planning board, they did admit to having little or no knowledge on more than one of the questions, yet answered them all in a manner that made it appear that there would be not environmental impact due to the proposed zoning ordinance changes. At the least, "Material Staging Areas" will cause a significant increase in traffic flow, along with substantial new concerns for environmental health.

Any changes that are made to the Oxford zoning ordinances should be handled with the utmost respect and due diligence on the part of all our public officials. As community residents, we deserve to have our health, safety and general welfare protected.

David Davis spoke next and said he would like to see a copy of the short environmental assessment form concerning the material staging areas. He also stated that he feels our zoning ordinance conflicts with the new Comprehensive Plan that is being drafted.

Mina Takahashi asked what the attorney for the Association of Towns had to say about the Planning Board's procedure for special exceptions and the legal and enforceability of the zoning ordinance changes. Their answer to this should be in writing.

Bruce Leonard spoke of problems with the zoning changes and would like a public referendum held for the residents to vote for or against fracking and abide by that decision.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The September 2014 collateralized deposit account information report was received from BNY Mellon.

A letter was received from Real Property Tax Services concerning the raising of the exemption level for Senior citizens. The level now stands at \$24,400. Decision was made to leave the exemption at this level. The final State equalization rate is 62.00 for the Town of Oxford.

A letter was received from County of Chenango Industrial Development Agency making us aware that their agency is engaged in a nearly \$6 million project to restore serviceability to the 45-1/2 miles of New York Susquehanna & Western railroad tracks in Chenango County. Many of the grade crossings have been paved over and the CCIDA requests that no additional modifications be made to road crossings and all crossings be restored to their pre-modification condition prior to the commencement of work in the spring of 2015.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that the Town of Oxford doesn't have any railroad crossings that have been paved over.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Supervisor Wilcox has appointed Steven Graham and his wife, Erin, as Assessor and Clerk, respectively, for the Town of Oxford. Their office hours have been set for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

The revised 5-Year Fire Contract has been received with changes only made to the amount being paid by the towns of Smithville and Preston. The amount was decreased for these towns. The amount for the Town of Oxford in 2015 is \$158,131.00 and did not change. This represents a \$6,000 increase. Totals: 2016, \$161,671; 2017, \$165,211; 2018, \$168,751; 2019, \$172,292.

Motion was made by Alan Davis and seconded by Jerry Locke to accept the 5-Yr. Fire Contract. The motion carried with 5 Ayes.

The Animal Shelter Agreement for the calendar year 2015 was received from the Chenango County SPCA. The agreement and fees will remain the same as 2014 for 2015.

Motion was made by Jerry Locke and seconded by Ron Charles to accept the SPCA Animal Shelter Agreement for the year 2015. The motion carried with 5 Ayes.

Jerry Locke commented on the excellent work that Stephen Foster has done on the "Little Merritt" cemetery and the book he authored. He felt that the Board should do something for him in recognition of this work and his accomplishments. Supervisor Wilcox stated that the first printing of the book sold out and the second printing is going very well. The Board agreed to be thinking about a suitable way to commend Stephen.

Proposed Revisions to Local Law #1-2014:

Revisions held over from the September 10, 2014 meeting, together with additional revisions, were re-introduced by Lawrence Wilcox upon the recommendation of the Town of Oxford Planning Board.

Jerry Locke summarized the "Special Exception" addition to the local law, which was approved by the Planning Board at their September meeting. He suggested that a Public Hearing be set for the Special Exception – Section 35 only. The other changes were covered at the previous Public Hearing.

Board member Ron Charles asked if our attorney has given us any answer to the questions he brought up at the September board meeting? Supervisor Wilcox hasn't received anything at this time. He also has been in touch with the Association of Towns for their input.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that the public meeting on the proposed Local Law #1-2014 will be put postponed until we receive answers to our questions from the Town Attorney and Association of Towns.

Preliminary Budget Review:

Supervisor Wilcox presented the 2014 Preliminary Town Budget for review. Following the review and a few line amount changes a motion was made by Jerry Locke and seconded by John Hofmann to hold the Public Budget Hearing on Thursday, November 6, 2014, at 7:45 pm in the Village Hall. Motion carried with 5 Ayes.

A legal notice will be published in the Evening Sun newspaper, posted at the Town Office and placed on the Town of Oxford website (townofoxfordny.com).

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Supervisor Wilcox reported for Town Highway Superintendent Tefft that equipment was in good shape and all work is up-to-date. All stone and oiling of roads has been completed for this year. The 2001 Truck, put up at Auction recently, was purchased for \$710.00.

BILLS & CLAIMS: October 2014

Claims #161 thru #177, General Fund: Total: \$ 9,886.94

Claims #159 thru #179, Highway Fund: Total: \$118,965.09

Motion was made by Alan Davis and seconded by Ron Charles to pay the bills and claims.
Motion carried with 5 Ayes.

The next Town Board meeting will be held on November 6, 2014 at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall. By law our regular meeting date had to be changed in order to hold the Public Budget Hearing within five days following the November election.

Meeting was adjourned by Supervisor at 8:45 pm.

James W. Hemstrought Jr.
Town Clerk