

OXFORD TOWN BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 8, 2012
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 Oxford High School Building Auditorium for the transaction of such business that may lawfully come before the Board. The location of this meeting was changed to accommodate the larger number of Oxford residents expected to talk about Gas Drilling.

Present were:

Supervisor: Lawrence Wilcox
Council: Jerry Locke
 Alan Davis
 Larry Beckwith
 John Hofmann

Town Clerk: James W. Hemstrought Jr.
Highway Superintendent:

Absent: Timothy Tefft, Highway Superintendent.

Others Present: 134 residents in or near the Oxford area.

Minutes Previous Monthly Meeting:

Jerry Locke made a motion to approve the minutes of July 11, 2012. Motion was seconded by Larry Beckwith 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 July 31, 2012. He also gave the following Revenues, Appropriations and Checkbook Balances:

July 2012

Revenues	\$68,125.16
Appropriations	\$98,868.12

Check Book Balances:

General	\$ 67,441.70
Highway	\$408,670.50
T&A	\$ 7,381.62
Payroll	\$ 16,531.55
Water District #1	\$ 3,338.92

COMMUNICATIONS:

The collateralized deposit information for the Town of Oxford was received from Bank of New York, Broker/Dealer Services for NBT Bank. This report covered the time period July 1 through July 31, 2012.

Invitation was received from Anna Stark, Chairman of the Village Planning Board, to attend workshops concerning the natural gas drilling issue. The first workshop has been scheduled for Wednesday, August 22, 7:00 pm, at the Village Hall. The Town Planning Board is also invited.

A packet, containing the Town's General Insurance Policy renewals, was received from Mang Insurance Agency, Norwich, NY. The Board Councilmen were asked to look this over and be prepared to take action on this at the next Town Board meeting, September 12. David Crane, representing Mang Insurance, is expected to be present to answer questions.

Letter was received from NYMIR Insurance stating that the Town of Oxford is currently in the top 5% of policy holders.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Supervisor Wilcox read a letter that he drafted to be sent to the NYDEC Commissioner, Joseph Martens, Albany, NY, explaining the various regulations and agreements that the Town of Oxford has in place concerning natural gas exploration and drilling. The Town Board was in favor of sending this letter to Commissioner Martens, the Governor and other elected officials.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Minutes of this portion of the Board Meeting were taken by Patricia Nelson, Village Clerk.

NATURAL GAS DRILLING:

Supervisor Wilcox discussed his receipt of a request to enact a moratorium on gas drilling. The Board agreed to discussion on this topic. Supervisor Wilcox requested to hear from Town Residents as a priority and asked that Speakers limit themselves to three minutes each. Paul Romahn has agreed to monitor each speaker's time on The Board's behalf.

First Speaker: Denise LaTourette

Mrs. LaTourette feels that the entire issue is a landowner deeded rights issue. Is the Town Board qualified to determine landowner deeded rights? Isn't the DEC the qualified entity to do this? The DEC has been studying the gas drilling issue for over four years. They have the resources, staff and scientific data to make the decision as opposed to the limited resources of a local municipality. Does a local municipality have the right to override the State of New York? Does a local municipality have the resources to deal with the inevitable lawsuits? Mrs. LaTourette urged the Town Board to pass a resolution stating a neutral position deferring decision to the DEC.

Mrs. LaTourette provided the following written statement to The Town Board:

First and foremost, this issue is about landowner rights. Simple deeded rights. Unfortunately, the issue of gas drilling is hopelessly intertwined.

While you, the board, are capable to pass a resolution declaring a moratorium, or one to allow drilling, are you qualified? Is this the best choice? Isn't the obvious choice to pass a neutral resolution and defer to the NYS DEC's findings?

On what basis does the town or village of Oxford have the power to strip my deeded rights as a landowner, which is what a moratorium on gas drilling would do? Any person owning any amount of land should be concerned. The taking of YOUR deeded rights! What's next? Will you be telling me that I cannot harvest my forest? I cannot harvest my fields?

Many of us have valid questions and concerns pertaining to the hydraulic-fracturing process. The DEC has been studying this issue for over four years. I can confident that the DEC's draft and supplemental RDSGEIS report addresses most, if not all of them. It has taken in over 60,000 questions. The DEC, and their resources of experts, staff and scientific data should determine what is safe and responsible. Is this really an issue for a locality to independently judge? Do we think that we have the expertise, the staff, the budget or the time? Do the village and town have more knowledge and resources than the DEC?

If NYS determines that safe and responsible gas harvesting can occur, can a local municipality override the State? Does a local municipality have the right to strip me of my deeded rights?

Furthermore, who is going to be left liable for the lawsuits that will be brought? If the village or town does elect to pass a moratorium, and the State gives the go ahead, there will be lawsuits. It is inevitable. I can't think of any local municipality that is prepared to bear that burden.

I agree that this is an emotional issue, for both sides. Frankly, I am tired of the vocal minority bringing opinion and unsupported data. It is a play on our emotions. It is sensationalism at it's best. Bias is created by the spewing and spin of data and headlines and use of outdated information. Unfortunately, local government and residents do not have the resources to investigate all the claims, and separate fact from fiction.

I urge our town and village to do the right thing. I urge you to pass a resolution to indicate a neutral position, deferring the science and safety to the NYS DEC with over four years of research, experts, budget and resources. Do not strip landowners of their deeded rights at a local level!

Second Speaker: Fred Lanfear

Mr. Lanfear owns 20 acres in a hollow. He feels that his landowner rights give him the right to question any business that might endanger his property, health or safety. He feels his rights extend beyond his 20 acres of land.

Third Speaker: Vincent Granata

Mr. Granata states that he has been a resident of Oxford since 1971 – Mr. Granata provided a written statement the questions below:

1. What studies have the DEC and EPA done in our area to protect our wet lands and water reservoirs? Additionally, where is all of the water coming from to fill the 200 tanker trucks needed to frack and where is this radioactive contaminated polluted water going?

2. Is there anyone on the board who may have conflict of interest by having a lease or who are affiliated with the gas industry, are they prepared to excuse themselves from voting in this situation...morally and ethically?

3. What studies has the board done to examine the impact to the infrastructure? Can the town and village budgets handle the costs and insurance costs if problems arise? Can the sewage treatment plant even handle the volume and safely cleanse the water before it is released in the river? Who is paying for this added expense?

4. Is our law enforcement and emergency/fire departments trained to handle chemical spills and explosions since there are over 900 chemicals, methane and radioactive elements to contend with? Will emergency vehicles be able to navigate safely and timely to address any crisis?

5. Is this gas drilling process really safe and responsible when deficient monitoring and lack of regulations and accountability of ridding wastes along with the fact that the disclosure of the many toxic chemicals are withheld from the public so our hospitals and doctors do not even know how to effectively treat anyone who has been exposed and can they handle emergency situations on a large scale?

6. PA has had proof of toxic waste as a de-icer on roads and for dust control. Will you allow that to happen here and how will you prevent it?

7. Who is going to clean up toxic spills if a truck should overturn and contaminate the area? Are we prepared for these accidental hazards? Will our locals be able to be protected and evacuated from these areas timely? Can our local hospitals even handle the increased number of emergency room visits?

8. Who will pay for the aftermath of debris that will be left behind as eye sores when they are through? Who will plant all the trees that they stripped away and who is going to take care of the pipeline when the gas is depleted?

Fourth Speaker: Troy Tasinelli

Mr. Tasinelli is Pro Gas drilling for economic purposes.

Fifth Speaker: Clarice Bornschein

Ms. Bornschein states that she owns 57 acres in Oxford. She wants to know if what happened in Pennsylvania will happen here. Can The Board and NYS give us any guarantees that fracking will not harm our environment? Ms. Bornschein wants to know if The Board is aware that if you hold a mortgage and a lease is signed and a leak occurs that you are in violation of your mortgage and your insurance? Clarice states that you have to have permission from your mortgage holder to drill or frack. Clarice states that you will lose your agricultural exemptions on your property if you drill or frack.

Ms. Bornschein provided the following written statement to The Board:

Questions

1) Are the residents/homeowners aware that signing a gas lease could violate their:

A) Terms of mortgage contract: read your contract to see if there is a clause for hazardous materials.

B) Title Insurance regarding lenders

C) Homeowners Insurance: Not valid for hazardous chemicals. You may be required to purchase Commercial Insurance costing more than your homeowners insurance

D) Could lose your agricultural tax exemption (if it applies)

2) In Chenango County where will the FLOWBACK be disposed of and who pays for the additional expenses regarding the toxins brine and radioactivity from sludge? And (2) will taxpayers pay additional taxes to dispose of this waste that comes from fracking? Or what will the additional costs to taxpayers be?

There are already cases of illegal dumping, dumping into Chenango County streams and using the brine from hydro fracking being used on a quasi-legal basis as dust control on our dirt roads and de-icing in the winter.

3) Will we be protected regarding air monitoring stations from gas fumes with their toxins and carcinogens hugging the ground from the high pressure pop-off valves releasing 100 million

cubic feet of natural gas into our air? Whom can we trust to monitor these levels, certainly not the gas companies?

Sixth Speaker: John Hill, Cross Road - Oxford

Mr. Hill feels that everyone should do more research. In Mr. Hill's opinion, if the gas drilling is done properly, no problems will occur.

Seventh Speaker: Susan Dorsey, 425 Winner Road - Oxford

Ms. Dorsey spoke to make corrections to previous inaccurate statements:

The EPA will state: No drinking water has ever been contaminated by gas drilling.

Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover gas drilling issues, they were never meant to. The gas company holds the liability, NOT the homeowner and the gas companies will bear the burden of the additional liability insurance costs.

The Previous statements about mortgages are incorrect. Every other state can drill without affecting mortgages. Realtors simply need to research the appropriate types of sales.

Eighth Speaker: Vic Furman - Fuel Director, Joint Landowners Coalition

How is the Board going to protect the town more than the DEC can? The benefits from drilling will far outweigh the problems. The gas drilling industry has a very high safety rating. Mr. Furman doesn't want The Board to be swayed by "Fear Facts". Money is not evil; it's what makes the world go around. America needs to reinvest in American fuel instead of fighting overseas for foreign fuels. Mr. Furman states that there has been no pollution found in PA from gas drilling.

Ninth Speaker: Joan Swertfager - 40 yr resident, Painter Hill

Ms. Swertfager feels that this is not a question of right or wrong; it is a question of Landowner Rights, period.

Tenth Speaker: Phil Sherman - Welding Business Owner

Mr. Sherman stated that there is a lot of misinformation being spread around. New York is NOT Pennsylvania. Mr. Sherman works for and is an environmentalist. He is PRO Gas Drilling because he feels that safe drilling can take place. Mr. Sherman urges people to wade through the misinformation. He states that The Board cannot be the DEC. Mr. Sherman wants to execute gas drilling and feels that the DEC will execute it.

Eleventh Speaker: Hans?? Neighbor of Phil Sherman

Hans would like the Board to make a resolution to let the DEC do their job. He has been to PA, has seen for himself. Hans feels that he should be able to choose what happens on his land.

Twelfth Speaker: David _____ (?)

David stated that the gas has been underground for hundreds of years. He does not want The Board to rush; He wants The Board to take its time deciding what to do.

Thirteenth Speaker: Stanley MacCumber

Mr. MacCumber stated that the chemicals going into the ground do cause cancer and will come to the surface. Is there anyone here from Oxford that doesn't know a child that has had cancer? Mr. MacCumber feels that we have enough gas for hundreds of years, we do not need to drill for more gas...people only want to do so because of greed. He feels the chemicals from gas wells will cause more cancer. Do we want to increase cases of childhood cancer because of our greed?

Fourteenth Speaker: Jeff Barrows

Mr. Barrows owns 11 acres in Oxford and works for Norse Energy. He has his own concerns. He is waiting to see what the DEC is going to come up with. Mr. Barrows stated that in NY we are already more regulated than Pennsylvania ever was and NY will most likely be even MORE regulated before any drilling begins. Drilling companies are not allowed to get anywhere near wetlands. There is no more drilling through aquifers. If the DEC does their job then gas drilling can be done safely. Mr. Barrows would like the Town to wait for the DEC to come up with their regulations before making a decision.

Fifteenth Speaker: Mina Takahashi

Mrs. Takahashi and her husband own a 106 acre organic farm in Oxford. She asks the Town Board for a two year moratorium. Mrs. Takahashi feels that if we don't put a moratorium in place before the DEC lifts their statewide moratorium then they can immediately start issuing

permits at that time. She feels that a moratorium is simply a method to give the Town Board time to make an informed decision. She has many questions about how The Town Board, Zoning Board, etc will protect its residents.

Mrs. Takahashi provided the following written statement:

8 August 2012

To the Oxford Town Board:

From my research and recent observations of the Oxford Town Board I can rest assured that we have a cautious town board that takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the town of Oxford. For example, in 2006 the Oxford Town Board demonstrated their caution when they enacted a moratorium to study the impacts of a NYRI proposal to put a high-voltage power line through the town. In 2007, the Town Board amended the zoning ordinances, classifying gas drilling as a land use only permitted by special exception by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

With the impending delivery of the revised SGEIS from the DEC, I ask the Oxford Town Board, wouldn't enacting a two-year moratorium on high-volume, horizontal hydraulic fracturing be the safest, most responsible course of action? The DEC will lift its statewide moratorium and begin to process permits as soon as the revised SGEIS is issued. If we don't put a moratorium in place before that time, the DEC can immediately start issuing permits in our town. What if, upon reading the SGEIS regulations, we don't like what we see or feel that they are inadequate or wrong for Oxford? The state has not said that they will offer a grace period for towns to review the SGEIS. Inaction on this issue constitutes an implicit agreement to something we haven't even seen yet and leaves us open, unprotected, and unable to have a say in how we want to protect and safeguard our rural, agricultural town from the heavy-industrial process of high-volume hydrofracking.

A moratorium is merely a way to give our town board the time to make a considered, measured decision on if and how we allow hydrofracking to take place in the town of Oxford. Do not let the state rush us into this. We can control the timeframe in Oxford if the Town Board enacts a moratorium. We need time for town officials to answer the many questions Oxford residents have about how town government will protect and safeguard the community. I have questions about how the Zoning Board of Appeals will do their review. At the recent Town Planning Board meeting, a town wide permitting process was mentioned along with road bonds required by drilling outfits. How will that work? How can we be sure that there is no appearance of impropriety with our decision makers? How does our town's code of ethics read? When will the town office be able to produce a copy of the town charter so the community can understand how our government functions? We need time to work out these details. We need time to consider how hydrofracking meshes with the Oxford Vision Plan. And we need time to observe the impacts in other towns that proceed with hydrofracking. Only after these important steps, afforded by a moratorium, can we decide if and how this activity will take place safely and responsibly in Oxford.

I respectfully submit this statement and request that it be included in the minutes of this meeting,

Mina Takahashi

293 Northrups Corners Road

Oxford, NY 13830

Sixteenth Speaker: Bryant LaTourette

Mr. LaTourette stated that compulsory Integration is governed by the State, not local governments. A moratorium takes away deeded landowner rights. A moratorium seizes your mineral rights. Mr. LaTourette requests that The Town Board let the State make the decision regarding gas drilling.

Seventeenth Speaker: Ellen Anderson

Ms. Anderson does not agree that a moratorium takes away landowner rights. She works in a medical office and is afraid of what will happen if our environment disintegrates due to gas drilling. Ms. Anderson feels it is difficult enough already to get qualified medical providers to come to our area.

Ms. Anderson provided the following written statement to The Board:

I'm Ellen Anderson of Oxford, a surgical scheduler at a Chenango County optical clinic. What will happen to our medical professionals as the quality of our lives deteriorates? What happens after a fracking spill, explosion, or fiery tanker accident?

Our local hospitals and clinics already have difficulty finding qualified employees. Local physicians are retiring, but administrators can't find replacements. Those who remain quit because they are overworked.

Our local Oxford UHS Clinic has experienced a turnover of doctors. What happens to the staff at the vets' home when the water is contaminated and the ambulances can't navigate roads clogged with hundreds of tanker trucks spewing diesel fumes and carrying radioactive sludge?

If you visit Pennsylvania, you'll understand why nurses, medical technicians and skilled office staff won't want to live and work here. People in Pennsylvania just like us have graciously invited us down to see for ourselves the devastation of hydro-fracking. If you're interested in joining a tour, please sign up with me.

Thank You.

Eighteenth Speaker: Howard Lockhardt

Mr. Lockhardt has paid taxes in Oxford for 25 years and lived here ten years. He wants everyone to take a step back. There are risks involved with everything. Mr. Lockhardt feels we need to look at risk versus reward. He stated that our country and our local economy are in dire straits and that gas drilling can help us. Safety and Gas drilling are not mutually exclusive; DEC recommendations can help our community. The Town Board and local residents are not qualified to make the decision. Mr. Lockhardt asked the Town Board to forego the moratorium and abide by the upcoming DEC recommendations.

Nineteenth Speaker: Irving Wesley Hall

Mr. Hall stated that he previously posed 20 questions to the Village and Town. Mayor Terry Stark of the Village Board provided an eight page answer. (Attached)

Mr. Hall has Three Questions for Town Board:

When is Town going to respond to Twenty Questions and the corresponding Gas Drilling responses online?

How soon can the Town Board instruct its Planning Board to meet with Village Planning Board to deal with the Comprehensive Vision Plan for the community?

What does The Town Board feel are the consequences of a Village moratorium regarding gas drilling?

Twentieth Speaker: Dan Taylor - Basswood Road, Oxford

What have the extraction industries done for Appalachia?

Does the exemption of the hydrofracking industry from US environmental laws not say something to us?

Mr. Taylor feels that at a minimum, The Town of Oxford needs a moratorium to examine facts and consider our options.

Twenty First Speaker: David Davis

Where do we go if our water is polluted? Will they deliver us clean water?

Mr. Davis feels that the quality of life will be degraded by the industry itself. Village will be impacted as well as town even if Village has a complete BAN and Town allows drilling.

What is the Town going to do about the flood of transient workers? What about the breach of law and order? Are we going to triple or quadruple the size of our police force?

Mr. Davis believes that issues justify a moratorium by the Town Board.

Mr. Davis provided the following written statement to The Board:

To the Oxford Town Board:

There are many unanswered questions that cause even those who think that unconventional gas drilling can be done safely. The first of these questions go to the question of water contamination and how that is to be prevented. Secondly, is the problem of air quality degradation. A third area of concern is that compressor and pump noise and twenty-four hour lights as well as noise from trucks. A fourth concern is that trucks will pose a safety menace, especially to children trying to get to and from school. A fifth area is an overall concern about crime, rent inflation and then blight that accompany the boom of the influx of young unattached young men far from home.

1. How does the Town plan to make sure that produced water in lined pits does not leak or become over-topped when flash flooding occurs?
2. How does the Town plan to regulate and enforce air quality standards around drilling and compressor sites?

3. How does the Town plan to monitor and regulate noise from compressors and other drilling operations?
4. How does the Town plan to make sure that trucks do not endanger citizens, particularly children?
5. What will the Town do to make sure that the influx of transient workers does not adversely degrade the quality of life in our communities through increase in crime, drinking, drug use and homelessness?

I do not believe our community has even begun to answer these and many other questions. We cannot wait until this technology and its workers are here to tackle them; they must be in place before the boom begins. We need a moratorium until we know these answers. If the problems cannot be solved or prevented, the process should be banned.

Sincerely,

David J. Davis
29 Butler Street
Oxford, NY 13830

Twenty Second Speaker: Henry Spinella

Do people support all government the way they are currently supporting the DEC? Mr. Spinella stated that we need to be smarter. Government regulation does not always prevent pollution of our environment. Government agencies do not always do their jobs...they need someone "watching over them". Mr. Spinella feels it is selfish to be in such a hurry to start gas drilling because government agencies are influenced by lobbyists and they do not always make decisions in the best interest of the people.

Twenty Third Speaker: Trellan Smith - Basswood Road

Due to state moratorium that has been in place for over five years Mrs. Smith and her husband have had the time to research and have discovered that gas drilling is a "dead end choice".

Mrs. Smith stated that new studies are coming out every day. She also stated that the Town's Zoning regulation changes that were made in 2007 did not consider information available now from new studies.

Mrs. Smith provided the following statement to the Town Board:

*Trellan Smith
450 Basswood Road
Oxford, NY 13830*

8 August 2012

Dear Members of the Oxford Town Board,

My husband and I have devoted a great deal of time over the past five years to researching the process known as hydraulic fracturing. We own a large parcel of land here in Oxford, and were approached by more than a few land-men in 2006 and 2007. We attended a number of the large coalition meetings in the area and explored the various options open to us. We considered what it would mean to our relationship and use of the land we live on to have a gas well on our property, and at one time even believed that we and our land might be best protected from the industrial nature of gas drilling if we had a good lease in place, one that would protect us and our neighbors.

But thanks to the state moratorium that has been in place for the past five years, we have had the chance to really investigate what the hydraulic fracturing process entails. We have traveled around Pennsylvania, read scientific studies, listened to the testimonies of people who have lived in proximity to the se large, industrial well sites. And I am grateful to the State of New York for the time it has given us. Because the more we learned, the more convinced we became that this was a dead end choice.

Now, on the eve of the State's lifting of their multi-year moratorium, and with the current administration's suggestion that Home Rule will play a part in the permitting process, we have asked ourselves not only what hydraulic fracturing would mean for us, but what it would mean for this beloved town of ours. And, having done a lot of homework, I believe there are more than a few people in positions of leadership here on the Town and Village boards who have asked themselves that same question. They have worked hard to put some provisions in place. And we should thank them for their efforts – all done while we were busy living our lives. But I also know that we learn more about this industry every day. Studies come out weekly with new and disturbing findings. And so I would argue that the efforts that were made by our town leaders, in good faith, in 2007, when changes to the zoning regulations were made, were not done with full

awareness of what we know now. The fact that there are still far too many unanswered questions – of health, of risk to the environment, of protections of landowner rights – including the right NOT to be integrated – and of what sort of economic benefits (given higher rents, unmortgageable houses, and unsellable land) of this practice we would see in the long run.

So my question to this board is this: Can you look out at the people in this room and assure them, with your hand on your heart, that this town's zoning regulations will protect their water, their land and their children? Because if you can't assure them of that, then I urge you, tonight, to put a moratorium in place until such time as those assurances can be made.

Respectfully,

Trellan Smith

Twenty Fourth Speaker: Paige Smith - Jones Road, Preston, NY – Veterinarian and Toxicologist

Ms. Smith stated that water quality declines with "disruption" that occurs with processes such as hydrofracking. A large study is coming out discussing findings and local municipality responsibilities. Ms. Smith feels that a moratorium is necessary for The Board to review these findings.

Ms. Smith provided the following written statement to The Board:

Thank you, Supervisor Wilcox and The Board, for allowing us as citizens to request a moratorium so that the Town can have the time needed to wade through some of the confusion that has arisen on this issue and to restore community confidence and cohesion.

My name is Paige Smith. I am a veterinarian and a toxicologist. I have served in this community in Boy Scout leadership positions and I help lead the monthly drum circle at 6 OTS. I consider the Oxford United Methodist Church my church family.

I actually live in the Town of Preston but I pay School taxes to Oxford and Oxford is where I shop and frequent.

Like so many people, I reviewed the SGEIS and submitted comments. I understand that a revised version has been drafted and has been reviewed by certain invested parties and perhaps you on the Board have an idea of the final form.

My concern is that it is a meaty document (over 1000 pages); that, at least in the draft document, there were items defined as responsibilities of local municipalities (as a couple of examples control over the roads...to establish a system of truck routes, with a variety of weight, height, lengths; performance of road condition studies and development of road use agreements and 2) the expectation that municipalities are to monitor the DEC's website for information regarding gas development in the area, etc). So a moratorium would at least allow the town some time to understand the final document, fulfill these obligations and to prepare the procedures needed for a smooth transition.

*When there are statements in the draft SGEIS such as in section 7.1.5 **Setback from FAD Watersheds** "Based on the analysis set forth in Section 6.1.5, the Department concludes that high-volume hydraulic fracturing within the NY and Syracuse watersheds poses the risk of causing significant adverse impacts to these irreplaceable water supplies." I believe that any time we can invest in a moratorium to avoid encountering those risks in our own irreplaceable water supplies would be a wise investment indeed. Please consider putting a moratorium in place.*

Thank you so much.

Twenty Fifth Speaker: Margaret Davis, Physician

Mrs. Davis requested the Town Board take its time and be proactive. She feels the industry has large money backers and does not want Board to be influenced by this.

Mrs. Davis provided the following written statement to The Board:

To the Oxford Town Board:

I have previously expressed my concerns about the danger unconventional gas drilling presents to public health and the safety of citizens of Oxford. There are several unanswered questions the Board must consider to protect local residents.

Specifically:

What plans are in place for initial and periodic water quality monitoring? How can we find out the specific chemicals used BEFORE injection into the well so we can test and obtain samples before drilling? How will water quality be monitored in other sources such as the river or streams where there might be human or animal exposure? What recourse will the Village have if

contamination occurs? What will be the village liability if human or animal health is compromised as the village allowed the process?

What plans are in place to restrict placement of waste holding reservoirs? Will they be permitted close to homes, schools, parks, or water supplies? What plans are in place for monitoring for ground contamination? (The same concerns about notice preceding chemical use and testing also apply to soil.) How will the village respond to the potential overflow and resultant contamination that might occur in the event of a flood?

Oxford has an excellent police force. What plans are in place to expand that department to meet the needs of the village if we are faced with the increased population, road traffic and public safety concerns that come with the industry? How will this be funded? What increase in taxes is anticipated to meet this need?

Has Oxford considered the increased need for emergency medical and fire fighting services needed? How will that need be funded? Will we need a paid ambulance service? Will we need to provide training for hazardous material handling and decontamination?

What is the Town's liability as the local governmental agency in the event of personal injury? Property loss?

Oxford is faced with difficult decision. I would request the Town Board be proactive and protect our citizens from a well funded and powerful industry. A moratorium would allow us all to make careful decisions and not be forcefully manipulated by outside financial interests.

Thank you,

Margaret D. Davis, M.D.

Twenty Sixth Speaker: Josh ? Lives in McDonough

Josh worked for Millennium pipeline. He is going to Lackawanna school for compression technology. Josh is a hunter, trapper and fisherman. He doesn't have faith in the DEC to do its job to ensure environmental safety.

Twenty Seventh Speaker: Richard Anthony, New Virginia Road, Oxford, NY

Mr. Anthony would like to respond to Josh (above) Rivers and fish are affected by droughts, the DEC cannot control the effects of a drought. Mr. Anthony is a strong supporter of the environment. He stated that there are no guarantees in life and that the DEC will come out with the best science there is. Mr. Anthony feels that the Town Board cannot possibly override the DEC with all of their resources and the research they have done.

Twenty Eighth Speaker: Estelle MacCumber

There are clusters of cancer in this area that are not seen anywhere else in NYS. Studies have been done by Syracuse Research Hospital and St. Jude Hospital regarding these clusters.

Twenty Ninth Speaker: Earl Colley, Field Director of Landowner Coalition

How many members of The Board have read the SGEIS? People need to read this to get answers to most of the questions asked tonight.

Laws #264 and 265 (Attached): If a certain percentage of a municipality's landowners say No to moratorium, The Town cannot legally put a moratorium in place.

DEC will be coming out with final version of SGEIS. The landowner coalition is requesting The Board come up with a resolution to wait for the DEC recommendations to come out.

Thirtieth Speaker: ? Town of Butternuts, Otsego County (gentleman that was filming)

This speaker feels that a moratorium should be enacted. He discussed Agreements versus Town Laws. This gentleman feels that a moratorium would be the best way for the Town Board to perform their due diligence.

Thirty First Speaker: Willard Bradley

Mr. Bradley feels that fear mongering is unnecessary. Mr. Bradley made the statement that gas drilling is NOT a new industry and that many many gas well employees are still alive and healthy. He has not heard of any adverse affects from the gas industry employees he has spoken to. This is not just an economic issue. Everyone here drives cars run by fuel. Everyone here uses electricity and many use natural gas to heat their homes. Burning wood to heat your home causes more pollutants than natural gas ever would. A moratorium is not a good idea. Let the State, the people with the expertise, make the decision. There is no reason to "wait".

Thirty Second Speaker: Janet Runcie - South Washington Ave, Oxford

Hydrofracking is not like electricity or vertical drilling. Where will the water be coming from? How many wells will be drilled? How many drills will be used and how much noise will result? Where will the water go after? Are there dangerous chemicals and where will they go? Ms. Runcie urged The Board to think about our children, the environment and our future.

Thirty Third Speaker: Paul Estelow

72 years old, lived in Oxford all his life -- will be praying for The Board to pass a moratorium.

Thirty Fourth Speaker: Gary Tasinelli

Mr. Tasinelli owns 135 acres in Oxford. He believes in landowner/taxpayer rights. Mr. Tasinelli stated that the decision to drill should be left up to the landowner. He believes that the Town Board should follow State recommendations.

Thirty Fifth Speaker: Larry Lewis

Does anyone have a solar system? Has anyone done a chemical analysis on their well? How often will this chemical analysis be done? Mr. Lewis doesn't feel that anyone in the room or on the Town Board has the knowledge to make this decision. He feels that no one should be violating landowner rights and he is against a moratorium. Mr. Lewis requests that The Board remain neutral on this issue. He believes that a moratorium will only present legal issues for The Town.

Thirty Sixth Speaker: Fred Lanfear (repeat)

Rights: Still feels he has equal rights as any other landowner, the right to protect his land from what other landowners are doing in his area

Risk: Feels that gas drilling may risk future generations, not just individuals

BS: Fear and Trepidation are involved, it's not BS, and it's a legitimate respect for our very livelihood

Estelle MacCumber asked The Board if Town Councilman that have vested interests are going to recuse themselves from voting.

Jerry Locke responded to this question. He stated that he was elected as a landowner, as a resident and he feels that his integrity is being questioned and that the question itself is way out of line.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that there are currently 20 gas drilling permits pending in Chenango County. He stated that none of those twenty permits are for property located in the Town of Oxford.

An audience member asked what the Town Board would be doing next.

Supervisor Wilcox stated that there are no motions pending to make a decision. His personal opinion is that The Board should wait until the final SGEIS comes out.

The discussion on gas drilling was called to an end at 9:18 pm.

Patricia Nelson
Village Clerk

BILLS & CLAIMS: August 2012

Claims #117 thru #135, plus payrolls of General Fund:	Total: \$64,590.05
Claims #116 thru #129, plus payrolls of Highway Fund:	Total: \$25,689.65

Motion was made by Jerry Locke and seconded by John Hofmann to pay the bills and claims. Motion carried with 5 Ayes.

The next Town Board meeting will be held on Sept. 12, 2012 at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting was adjourned by Supervisor at 9:30 pm.

James W. Hemstrought Jr.
Town Clerk