

A Town Board Meeting was held Monday, February 09, 2015, at 7:00pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: Stephen D. Flach, Supervisor
Thomas E Dolan, Councilman
Peter E. Masti, Councilman
Kenneth A. Burns, Councilman

ABSENT: George E. Langdon IV, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk
P.J. McKenna, Chief of Police

Supervisor Flach opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING COMMENT

Supervisor Flach stated that the record should reflect a full Town Board with the exception of Councilman Langdon.

AGENDA

- Public Announcements
 - Town Offices Closed February 16, 2015 – Presidents Day
 - Town Board Workshop Meeting of February 17, 2015 Canceled
- Public Comment Period
- Approval of Minutes of Meetings
 - Town Board Meeting, November 24, 2014
 - Public Hearing, December 8, 2014
 - Town Board Meeting, December 8, 2014
 - Special Town Board Meeting, December 9, 2014
- Old Business
 - Hannacroix Creek Restoration Project Update
- Resolutions
 - Appoint Planning Board Member
- Correspondence
 - RCS – Veterans Tax Exemption
- Upcoming Workshops/Meetings
 - Town Board Meeting, February 23, 2015, 7:00pm
 - ZBA Meeting, February 25, 2015, 7:00pm

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Office Closed

Supervisor Flach stated that the Town Offices will be closed February 16th for President's Day.

Meeting Canceled

Supervisor Flach stated that the Town Board Workshop scheduled for February 17th has been canceled due to the Association of Towns Annual Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Flach invited the public to comment at this time, hearing none ne moved to the next item on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Supervisor Flach stated that there were four sets of minutes for Town Board approval, a Town Board Meeting on November 24th, a Public Hearing on December 8th, a Town Board Meeting on December 8th and a Special Town Board Meeting on December 9th and then asked for a motion to approve them.

MOTION

On motion of Councilman Masti, seconded by Councilman Burns, the Town Board Minutes were approved as presented and read.

VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Langdon) – SO MOVED

OLD BUSINESS

Hannacroix Creek Restoration Project

Supervisor Flach read the following:

I have been in touch with FEMA and F.X. Browne with regard to the Restoration Project and funding.

F.X. Brown (Marlene Martin) has informed me that there is an additional \$21,000.00 in engineering that must be done, mainly reconfiguring of the lower portion of the stream. This must be completed before we can apply for the permits needed to complete the construction. It was thought that permits were going to cost approximately \$98,000.00. I have since learned that if the Town applies for a National Permit there is no cost - \$0.00. If, however, the Town applied of a Local Permit there would be a fee. I think this is a no brainer, apply for the National Permit and keep that money toward the actual construction. CFI was the low bidder on the construction work. Mr. Porcelli has been in touch with F.X. Browne on several occasions to see when and if the Town was going to continue with this project. Obviously, once the engineering is complete, the Town will have to rebid the project. CFI has expressed an interest in the project and is willing to work with the Town. The Town must still rebid the project, if CFI were to be the low bidder, the Town could make a decision at that time. We must keep in mind that the deadline for completion is September 30, 2015. Marlene Martin, thinks the best time to complete the project is August 2015, by then we will be able to avoid the trout spawning and long eared bats. Ms. Martin has also estimated time of completion to be approximately two (2) weeks. Keeping this in mind, I know that some of you have suggested that the Town complete the work on its own. While I am confident that our Highway Department could do this and that we would be able to find some volunteers, as stated, I am not sure that we will be able to complete the construction before the deadline of September 30, 2015. Doing the work using our own Department and volunteer's means that we are in everyone's busy season and must wait for them to be available. This could result in delays. I do not believe that FEMA will grant another extension for completion.

I have been in touch with Linda Moreno from FEMA. I inquired as to the vouchers that have been submitted. I was advised that \$149,766.35 was deposited in the Town's account. When I submitted those vouchers I was under the impression that we were to pay for permits. It was after submission of the vouchers that I learned we only pay for a Local Permit. I am sure that we were awarded extra money to offset the cost of permits as per my previous correspondence with Mr. Ed Ostrander at FEMA. Currently FEMA is

holding balances of \$128,476.69. This is the amount the Town will be awarded for the completion of the project. As of this date, the estimation to complete the project is \$343,663.50. Please note that with the redesign of the lower portion of the creek, this should reduce the cost of construction, how much is unknown at this time. The estimation to complete is a high number, I am hopeful that the number will be reduced and the estimate will be closer to \$300,000.00. This will still leave a shortfall of approximately \$172,000.00. I am currently working with FEMA in an effort to secure additional funding so this project can be completed. I was advised to wait a week and call Mr. Walter VanDerloo, the Deputy Chief at FEMA to inquire as to additional funds or alternate sources for funding.

A meeting has been scheduled for February 26, 2015 at 2:00pm. This meeting will be held in Town Hall. The following have been invited to attend: Marlene Martin (F.X. Browne), Kristin Cady-Poulin (DEC), Andrew Dangle 9 Army Corps of Engineers), Joseph Slezak (Albany Soil and Water), Edward Ostrander (FEMA), William Emanatian (FEMA), William Misuraca (Village of Ravena Mayor), Peter McKenna (Coeymans Police Chief), David Wukitsch (Attorney for the Town of Coeymans). Diane Millious, Town Clerk will be present to take minutes.

Thank you,
Lisa Cirillo

Supervisor Flach stated that Ms. Cirillo is his Secretary and took on part of the project town the end of last year and got the \$149,000.00 from FEMA, which was awesome. He added that they continued to plug away at the project and he wanted to keep everyone up to date on where they are.

RESOLUTIONS

Supervisor Flach stated that Mr. Collins came to him some time ago and said that he would be willing to be on the Planning Board and he spoke to him about a month ago and he said he was ready to do it. He continued by saying that it was advertised in the paper and on the website and they received one application from Mr. Michael McGuire who lives on Lawson Lake Road, has lived in the Town for approximately 6 years and he is an Assessor for another Town. He added by saying that in his letter Mr. McGuire noted that he plans on making the Town of Coeymans his life residency.

Councilman Dolan stated that he had spoken with Mr. McGuire and reiterated that he is the Assessor for West Sand Lake and a really good guy who would be perfect for the job. He added that as he had previously stated, he does not have anything against Mr. Collins, he thinks he will do fine also and in the future, so people don't think they are doing things are fixed in advance, they need to open it up from the beginning so people feel that they can contribute what they have to contribute.

Supervisor Flach stated that he will keep Mr. McGuire's resume at the top of the list and continued by saying that Mr. Collins is a local farmer and business man who has lived here his whole life and he is pleased that he is interested.

Councilman Burns stated that Mr. Collins is a smart guy and the perfect person for the job.

Supervisor Flach continued by reading the resolution to appoint Mr. Collins.

RES. #041-15 APPOINT PLANNING BOARD MEMBER

On motion of Supervisor Flach, seconded by Councilman Burns, the following resolution was APPROVED – VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Langdon) – SO MOVED

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans is desirous of filling a vacancy that exists on the Planning Board, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Albert Collins has expressed an interest in serving as a Planning Board Member,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans hereby appoints Mr. Albert Collins to serve as a Planning Board Member for a term to expire December 31, 2019.

CORRESPONDENCE

RCS Veteran’s Tax Exemption

Supervisor Flach stated that there is a copy of a correspondence from the Assessor which was sent by the RCS School District regarding the Veteran’s Exemption. He added that the school did a resolution on February 3rd and there is a copy available at the Town Clerk’s Office. He continued by reading the following excerpt from the resolution:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, after having conducted a Public Hearing on December 18, 2014, and having given the public the opportunity to be heard on the issue of the Board’s proposed adoption of the Alternative Veteran’s Exemption pursuant to Section 458A of Real Property Tax Law, hereby adopts the Alternative Veteran’s Exemption for Assessment Rolls prepared on the basis of taxable status date occurring on or after January 1, 2015, at the following basic maximum levels:

	Current Maximums	Proposed Maximums
Basic Exemption	\$12,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Combat Zone	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Disabled Veteran	\$40,000.00	\$20,000.00

Supervisor Flach stated that he wanted to let people know that this was done at the Town Board Meeting and asked if there were any comments.

Councilman Masti stated that he wanted to publicly acknowledge the School Board for doing this and thanked them for doing what was right.

Supervisor Flach stated that also in correspondence he had given to each Town Board Member a copy of a letter regarding County Mutual Aid as well as a Request for Proposal, which is what they are looking to send out for the Sewer work that needs to be done. He asked that they take a look at both for discussion in the future.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS

- Town Board Meeting, February 23, 2015, 7:00pm
- ZBA Meeting, February 25, 2015, 7:00pm

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments.

Town Clerk Millious stated that Water Rents that are collected in March are coming up and the Board needs to let her know what to do because of the re-levy circumstance for 2016 in which they are not going to be able to re-levy unless they are metered.

Supervisor Flach stated that according to Albany County, they are working on it and he has a call in and is trying to get some clarification.

Town Clerk Millious interjected that the Town pays the Village up front right away and she is concerned about that.

Supervisor Flach stated that they all are concerned and they will have to work with the Village to see what has to be done.

Town Clerk Millious stated that she wanted to thank her help, they were very busy in January collecting taxes and payments had to be made in person or postmarked on February 2nd to avoid penalty. She added that she knows that the weather was an issue but unless it is a Snow Emergency she had to collect the penalty the way it reads on the tax bill and they are now in to the penalty time so payment will now have to be made by March 2nd to avoid an additional penalty. She continued by saying that there is a locked mail box on the left side of Town Hall and her hours are 8:30am – 4:30pm. She reiterated that she wanted to thank her help for making it to work during the snow storms and then reminded every one of the Snow Emergency for parking on Town Streets.

Councilman Dolan asked Town Clerk Millious how many F.O.I.L. requests that she gets.

Town Clerk Millious stated that she didn't know off-hand but she has a log for keeping track of the 5-day response time.

Councilman Dolan asked if many are denied.

Town Clerk Millious stated that it is usually not her call and if someone wants Court Records they have to ask for them directly from the Court. She added that she did create a new Freedom of Information Request that is more up-to-date and allows for the Department to give more information on the status and it seems to work pretty well.

Councilman Dolan asked that when she gets a chance, that she give him a count for a year.

Town Clerk Millious stated that it varies and is more during an election year and a lot and on a computer report it counts pages but he wants the actual count of the requests.

Councilman Masti asked how much is charged per page.

Town Clerk Millious stated that it is .25 a page and some people have taken pictures, which is allowed, to avoid the charge and for things such as oversized maps she has to take them somewhere to be copied and in turn pass that charge on to the person requesting it.

Supervisor Flach stated that for someone taking a picture, her Office still has to do the work of getting it out.

Town Clerk Millious stated that she does not charge for the search and sometimes you really have to dig, it takes time and it's hard to estimate how long it will take. She continued by saying that they do not have to create anything and there are times when she can ask the purpose of the FOIL.

Councilman Burns asked with the new system if they will be able to bring it up on the computer.

Town Clerk Millious stated that it would depend on what the document is, for example the Assessment Roll, she only has a hard copy and would have to charge by page. She added that some documents are on-line and eventually she would like to have the taxes online for public access. She continued by reminding everyone that her Office now takes credit cards, there is a 3% fee with a \$2.00 minimum and the Town does not get that money, the company that provides the service gets the fee. She went on by saying that it is handy, some people are alright with the fee, others get upset by it and it is a service that the Town provides.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments.

Chief Police McKenna gave a brief report for the Police Department for January giving a breakdown of calls, vehicle and traffic tickets and arrests. He continued by saying that he would like to thank the past and current Board for seeking out the money, they are moving ahead with getting vests for all his Officer's thanks to a grant in the budget and each Officer will have a new and viable vest to wear. He added that he would like to thank Councilman Masti who will be training all of the Officers over a series of evenings in CPR, basic first aid and AED and as first responders if they are tasked to a call and arrive before EMS they will now know the basic first aid or the ability to use AED that they are looking to purchase for vehicles. He went on by saying that it is part of an advanced project to make sure that each car and each Officer is trained and equipped as much as possible because it is a big town of 64 square miles and you never know if you are going to be there first or for how long. He continued by saying that he is excited about the prospect of that moving forward and he thanks Councilman Masti for his ideas and the Board for the opportunity to outfit each and every Officer with a vest for the own safety and protection and down the road they are looking to applying for grants for new computers for the vehicles, which won't cost the Town anything and he will keep the Board informed. He added that he wanted to thank the Coeymans Hollow Fire Department along with Officer Meyers and Officer Kline for responding to a house fire on Payne Road, the response time and coordinated effort was incredible in tough weather in a difficult location and if it had not been for the efforts of Chief Kapusta, his men and the Officers that responded as well as Officer Griffen who came in to investigate, all would have been lost but much was salvaged, no life was lost, no pets or animals were injured and they did a fantastic job and he wanted to acknowledge the work that they do. He concluded by saying that he met with the Fire Police a few weeks ago, and in coming from a City to a small Town, they are an integral part of not only law enforcement but also the emergency services response because it frees up other people to focus on the task of fighting the fire or going back to services of law enforcement and he thanks them for that.

Supervisor Flach stated that he wanted to thank Chief McKenna for responding to a problem at night when his Officers were having a problem getting gas from the Highway Garage and added that he appreciates his hard work and is doing a fantastic job.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments.

Councilman Dolan stated that he wanted to know where they are with the assessments and reassessments and the hiring of Mr. Farbstein.

Supervisor Flach stated that they keep Bob Hilbreth on retainer every year, he was used by the past and current Assessor and he believes that it is just about finished and they are waiting for the final numbers. He added that he would welcome opinions from the Board as to whether there should be a second opinion.

Councilman Dolan stated that he only mentioned Mr. Farbstein because it is the way that it was presented when they talked about the budget and he didn't realize that another gentleman was doing it.

Supervisor Flach stated that he didn't realize it either and reiterated that he thinks it is finished and they are waiting for the final numbers and he wasn't sure where to go from there.

Councilman Dolan stated that they also talked about reassessing some property, which he thinks is a complicated endeavor.

Supervisor Flach stated that he will reach out to Mr. Farbstein if it is alright with the Board and see what he has to say.

Councilman Dolan stated that he believes the deadline is in March.

Supervisor Flach stated that he believes that it is March 1st and reiterated that he will reach out to Mr. Farbstein to look at those properties and double check some things and added that he had done great things for the Town in the past.

MINUTES BOOKTOWN OF COEYMANS**
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Councilman Dolan agreed that he had and he had done a great job on the Lafarge assessment. He added that the only reason why he brought up his name is because they talked about it in the budget process.

Supervisor Flach stated that he understood and he didn't realize at the time that they were using Bob Hilbreth. He then asked if there were any other comments.

Councilman Burns stated that he wanted to thank all of the workers and Fire Departments who answer calls all hours of the day and sacrifice a lot and doesn't get much credit for it. He added that he wanted to commend them all and have put a lot of their time into all the extra things that they do and they have a great thing going here and everyone should appreciate it.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments.

Councilman Masti stated that all the Fire Departments are volunteer, it's not like they are getting paid overtime and they are sacrificing their own personal time. He added that during the storm he was wondering where the Town plow was so he could get to work and 10 minutes later, Highway Superintendent Searles was there with his truck and he appreciates it because he would not have been able to get to work as well as thanking the Chief of Police for taking him up on his offer to teach basic first aid, CPR and AED and once he is done with the Officers he could do the same for the Highway Department or any other department.

Councilman Burns stated that it is a good idea because the Highway guys are out there all day long.

Councilman Masti stated that if the ambulance is on a call, then they have to call in their backup and more hands that know what to do in the case of an emergency, the better off it is and he would teach any Town employee who would like to take the course.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments, hearing none he continued by thanking all of the road crews that are out there and at times you can get 2-3 inches an hour depending on the storm. He added that they are getting out there as fast as they can and there are a lot of square miles of roads that they plow and it is one of the great things about living in the northeast, they have to drive on slippery roads.

Councilman Masti asked that the public not be too rough on the Highway Department, they are doing the best that they can and if they are not right there when you want them to be it's not because they don't want to be, it's because they are busy.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments, hearing none he offered a motion to adjourn the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

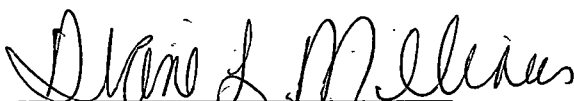
On motion of Supervisor Flach, seconded by Councilman Masti, the Town Board Meeting was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Langdon)

Time – 7:36pm

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED- As Read March 23, 2015


Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk