

TOWN OF OTEGO

June 12, 2013

The Town Board of the Town of Otego held a regular board meeting on Wednesday, June 12, 2013 at 6:00 pm at the Municipal Building, 3526 State Highway 7, Otego, New York. The purpose of the meeting was to audit the bills and any other business coming before the board.

The following members were present:

Joseph Hurlburt	Town Supervisor
Maryalice Brown	Town Clerk
Terry Brown	Councilperson
George Dolezel	Councilperson
Barbara Stanton	Councilperson
David Sheldon	Councilperson
JR Hurlburt	Highway Supt

Minutes

A motion was made by Barbara Stanton, seconded by Terry Brown, to accept the minutes of the May 8 meeting. Motion: 5 Ayes, 0 Nays

Supervisor s Report

The Supervisor s report for May will be presented next month.

Dog Control Report

Ellen Dwyer gave her report: five reports of loose or stray dogs, three dogs taken to the shelter.

County Representative

Kathy Clark reported that a local development corporation has been formed to facilitate the sale of Otsego Manor.

She also wants the town to be sure to include in their comprehensive plan things that the town would like to develop, not just things to be zoned out. This is important information that the county may assist with.

Assessor

Marie Walters gave her annual report. She reported on the latest assessment changes and building permits. Overall, there was a minor positive change to the roll. She gavethe board information on a new exemption for green building construction that the board may want to consider.

The equalization rate is 117.64. Ms. Walters gave the board a chart showing sales in Otego. She does not recommend trending because of the sales difference between the town and village. She gave the board information about revaluation costs for them to consider at budget time.

Ms. Walters urged the town board to replace Mr. Bruni with a qualified inspector and not use the county code office. She has worked with Mr. Bruni and the county and appreciates the accessibility of a local code officer. She also reminded the board that her term expires this September and she would like to continue with the town if they would reappoint her.

Planning Board

Mr. Butler reported that the final draft of the comprehensive plan should be completed and given to the town board around June 23.

The secretary that was recently hired has taken a full time position and has resigned. It was decided to advertise for the position in the Daily Star and Pennysaver.

Highway Report

JR Hurlburt reported that the culvert replacement on Flax Island Rd is scheduled to begin June 17 so there will be a road closure in the area until mid-August.

The roof at the highway garage needs major repair. The town will be getting some prices to consider for next year s budget.

Sustainable Development

Beth Westfall, town attorney, reported back to the board following the discussion last month. The town can form a local development authority but there are resources already available at the county level that may be of use to the town. The board needs to decide what project(s) may be feasible and find out what grants and funding sources are out there.

Stuart Anderson gave the board information and sites about recent funding for biodigesters in the upstate region.

There was discussion among the residents in attendance about researching projects that may have an economic benefit to the town.

Gas Drilling

Mark Dye addressed the board, stating that there is naturally occurring environmental radon being released all the time, not just during gas drilling; solar energy may or may not be feasible in this area; there is opposition to wind turbines as a possible energy source; gas drilling can be done without ruining the environment, and we must consider the economic boost from drilling.

Dick Downey gave the board a statement in reply to Jannett Barth s unanswered questions about the economic impact of gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale. In this paper he gives his disagreements with her study of the economic impact of gas drilling in western areas of New York State. He contends that many comparisons are meaningless and lack data.

Bill and Kathleen Holmstrom submitted a letter to the board in opposition of gas drilling. There are not enough regulatory guidelines to make drilling safe and urged the board to go to a website that addresses fracking issues including water safety in drilling areas in Pennsylvania. They reminded the town board that last year s survey showed that the majority of residents are opposed to gas drilling and they would like to see fracking banned in the town.

Ingrid Guiter submitted a letter to the board in opposition to gas drilling. Her concern is for our future which is our children. The industry cares only for profit, not the local residents, and she does not think we can trust DEC and the SGEIS rules to protect our children.

Nate Posner attended a talk by Dr. Ingraffeo who spoke about the business of gas drilling.

Lois Chernin submitted a letter to the board. We live in a republic where representatives are elected and it is their responsibility to investigate and decide to do what they feel is the best for their town and residents. The town board must stand for all the people, not just the vocal.

There was a letter from Katie Higgins expressing concern that town residents who have signed petitions against hydrofracking are being confronted about their participation in the petition. Mr. Hurlburt stressed that this issue will be decided some day and we will still be neighbors in our rural community and must remain civil to each other.

Code Officer

A motion was made by David Sheldon, seconded by Terry Brown, to enter into executive to discuss the code officer position. Motion: 5 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Executive session 7:35 7:50 pm.

After returning from executive session it was decided to advertise the position of code officer.

Warrant #6

A motion was made by George Dolezel, seconded by David Sheldon to pay the warrant in the following amounts: General Fund vouchers # _____ in the amount of \$ _____.

Highway Fund vouchers # _____ in the amount of \$ _____.

Motion: 5 Ayes, 0 Nays

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Maryalice Brown

Town Clerk

_____Town Supervisor

_____Town Clerk

_____Councilperson

_____Councilperson

_____Councilperson

_____Councilperson

_____Highway Supt.