

Town of Hamilton Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 13, 2014
Town Office, 16 Broad Street, Hamilton, NY

Present: Eve Ann Shwartz, Peter Darby, Donna LaMarco, Sue Reymers, Suzanne Collins, Chris Rossi. Absent: David Holcomb; Arrived Late at 7:40 pm: Bert Glazier. Guests: Margaret Miller, Village of Hamilton; Groton Johnson; Regina Silvestri

Call to order: Eve Ann called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Public Comment:

Margaret Miller gave an update on the sale of the Wayne Property as well as the property next to Oneida Savings Bank. There is a preliminary plan for housing next to the Oneida property. Margaret also mentioned potential upgrades to the Curtis Lumber business while Byrne is currently upgrading their products, too.

Regina Silvestri placed a request for the town to adopt a resolution naming 2014 the 'Year of Alexander Hamilton'. See Exhibit A. Regina is hoping that if the Village and Town of Hamilton both adopt the resolution that groups like the Hamilton Club can work with civic group and schools to do something like a play. Margaret Miller stated that the Village received the request and sent it to the Historic Commission because they do not see the rush. Regina wants to do this now to build up to January 2015. There is hope that this could lead to every January be Alexander Hamilton month. Chris Rossi loves the idea of honoring AH and would love to see the idea flushed out. The Historic Commission seems appropriate to flush it out and that the Resolution does not fit here. Regina seemed surprised because resolutions are common in NYC as it provides the backing for them to approach groups to do something. Eve Ann wants a more flushed out plan and wants to know about the history including a summary of his life. Come back in a month or two with the plans in a more concrete way. Eve Ann wants the Historic Commission to review and wants to know more because even though Regina does not want anything beyond proclamation, others might. Suzanne Collins feels that it would be fine to do. Peter did not have a strong opinion at this point. Regina stated that she will let the board think about it for a month and ask again next month. Eve Ann encouraged her to pursue her efforts while the Town considers the request once it receives more information.

Old Business:

Eve Ann needs a resolution to reappoint Elaine Hughes for a 3 year term on the Planning board ending December 31, 2016. She's agreed to serve again and has served for several terms. Resolution #13 was made by Peter, seconded by Suzanne. All were in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Town Clerk Business:

Eve Ann needs a motion to approve minutes from the January 9, 2014 meeting. Chris motioned, seconded by Suzanne. All were in favor. Motion was approved and carried.

Tax Collector Report:

Sue Reymers reported on the status of Tax Collection. She provided a packet and on page 3 was the report on Tax Collection. As of 2/10/14, the County has collected a total of \$2,505,632.90 of the total Tax Warrant of \$3,159,208.44. The Town has received two checks in payment of the portion to be paid to the Supervisor, which is \$955,543.04. Check #23008, \$662,639.13 received on 1/16/14 and Check #23017, \$292,903.91 received on 1/23/14, which satisfies the total Warrant to the Town. Sue only accepted one cash tax payment in the amount of \$1,190.59 and a check was promptly sent to Madison County with a copy of the tax bill.

Peter asked about the report mentioning that the County had some trouble in the beginning. Sue stated that the County needed to work out the dynamics of handling it and having all the staff prepared of what to do. When people were paying in person, the County staff entered the information into the software system and generated a paper receipt. Most people were used to the town just stamping their tax bill paid and this was an extra step but most people did not have a problem with it. One person had 13 properties and was frustrated by all the paper generated and waiting for all the receipts. Eve Ann thought that would be good feedback for the County. Sue felt that this is part of their process but in the end this is saving an enormous amount of time because we are not duplicating. Sue continued that having the time to ease into this position has been of tremendous value. And we can still respond to calls for request of copies of tax bills and we can now produce reports showing proof of payment. Sue also had only one person mail a check to the town with her name on the check even though everywhere it stated to the Town. That was mailed back to the tax payer as we could not forward it to the County to cash. She did notify the County so that they would know because of the timing. The person sent the payment at the end of January and since it was the end of the month the person could be penalized. Sue did not want that to happen, and hoped the County would be forgiving, but it's in the County's hands. Sue has not heard back from that person.

Peter thought it was amazing that there has not been more confusion. Eve Ann felt it was because we got the word out in the paper and that the notice was very clear. Sue stated that there are people using credit cards/e-checks either by online or in person. We don't have that breakdown. Eve Ann asked if we could get a report on that. Sue said that probably later we could get that information.

Suzanne had two people complain that had multiple properties that stated it took a while and the paper receipts that was a little frustrating. Their main complaint was that they had to take time off from work, go to Wampsville because they wanted their receipt. Eve Ann asked if they knew they could mail it and get receipts back in the mail. Suzanne was not sure. Suzanne asked if folks could still pay here. Eve Ann felt that could be a slippery slope. Sue stated that there were a few people that came into the office and they were taken care of at the Town office. Envelopes labeled for the County were available and we even offered stamps if they needed it. Two people insisted Sue accept the check for December early payments. Sue provided a cash receipt from the Town and this satisfies the need for their filing of their annual taxes. After Sue sent the payment to Madison County, they then mail the payment receipt from their office as official payment. Suzanne wondered about next year if they insisted they want to pay at the town office that we could tell them they could. Sue felt that could be confusing. Eve Ann thinks we should tell people that the Town thought about this long and hard and did it because in the end we would

save tax dollars by making it more efficient. And we are sorry for the personal inconvenience but it is worth the savings of labor. Peter clarified that the town and county did the same job twice and that we cut the labor of public employees in half. Sue agreed that she sees the savings down the road. She also said that some of the qualitative comments were “well we miss coming into the town office”, but they still come in for dump tickets.

Highway Report: Bert Glazier

Bert asked Donna how much we received from Madison County for plowing roads. Donna stated that we have received \$61,885 so far. Bert figures that we have three or four more checks coming. Bert reported that for plowing and sanding, they had to repair one truck that was down for three days and they had to use the spare. They also had to use their part-time employee for a few days. Dave Holcomb connected the guys to a demonstration that was given by NYSEG in Sherburne on how to handle a downed power line, safety, etc. Bert states that it happens all the time. It was very informative and took only a couple of hours. It took place at the McCredy building in Sherburne. Bert did not know a thing about it. The Town of Lebanon also went. All of the garage employees went as David had signed them up as well as Lebanon.

Bert went on to talk about an issue with a truck. The sub-frame that is under the dump body and that has two hydraulic rams on it, last year they tore one out, and this year it was the front one that tore out so we had to replace part of the sub-frame. Peter clarified that this is our 8 year old truck. Bert stated that third gear is bad too, which can be repaired but has not been repaired yet. Third gear is bad because of all the plowing. Peter and Bert talked about it. Peter said this was the truck we were going to make our spare and to hold it for 10 years. The question is, is this a good schedule? Is a 7 year truck the kind of truck we want in service? The idea was were going to avoid these kinds of repairs. Peter asked Bert what the transmission would cost. Bert will find out. Bert said that last year we did extensive work on it, they replaced a lot of hydraulic hoses and this year they replaced 3 or 4 more. It goes with age. The truck is used summer and winter.

Peter has a proposal on the Vehicle Replacement Schedule (VRS) see Exhibit A. The question is, what does it look like if instead of continuing with a 10 year replacement schedule, we make one of the trucks we keep for 7 years and make that the spare? And we sell the 14 year old truck. So all of our trucks are 7 years or newer all the time, except for the replacement. The replacement is oldest age is 14 rather than currently 20 years. Currently the spare is 1999.

Peter reviewed the VRS and walked the council through the new projections. The VRS will maintain the original projections at the top of the spreadsheet for reference while the bottom will change with time. Peter gave some highlights of the changes and how he and Bert came to some new conclusions. The VRS spreadsheet was projected on the wall for the council to see.

Peter explained that we want the projections to be in the ballpark of about \$408,000 (from original plan). We had a few places where numbers changed places. Loader was even swap. Bert recently got a price which is 3.6% higher than the truck we got three years ago. Our plan was 5%. So we made the plan at 4% and it jumped the numbers to \$616,000. Changed the pick up costs to \$2,000 because of the dealer we are working with wants us to trade with him and not sell on Auctions International. With the changes, it came out at \$404,000, same as projections. Peter

thinks we can change this and the projections are still good. If inflation goes up again, could be in trouble.

Peter proposes that we sell the 1999 plow truck this year and buy a new one. And use the 2006 as the spare. Complete it costs \$196,000 with box, plow and wing. We will put the 1999 on Auctions International. It will take about 6 months to sell and buy turnaround. We want to sell after plowing. Eve Ann clarified that we are now spending \$191,000 this year. Peter said that we will also be trading the backhoe too. Bert had an offer on the loader today. Bert can make the same deal as before and get a new loader for no cost with selling the old one.

Resolution #14 was made by Peter to authorize Bert to sell the old plow and buy a new plow truck. Chris seconded. All were in favor, motion approved and carried. Peter recommends that we modify the budget to reflect these changes. Adding these items will not affect the budget.

Bert continued with his report and stated that he, Donna and Sue have been in contact with FEMA. FEMA adjuster met with Alex in Lebanon. Likely that she will be in touch with us next week. Eve Ann clarified that we get the full amount of what we spend minus the 12.5%. Bert had stated that delays have been due to change in hands of who is handling our account.

Eve Ann asked that Peter talk about a recent meeting. Peter stated that Jeff Herbst called a meeting with Village, the Town and Colgate. It's a rehash of the meeting that he had before he turned it over to Tim Birnie who has a dream of a joint vehicle maintenance facility. There will be a meeting with Margaret Miller if she is available, Brian Hutzley, the new financial Vice President at Colgate, Tim Birnie, Peter, Bert will meet and hopefully have a proposal in few weeks. Peter discussed this with Eve Ann and with Bert it seems very unlikely that they will find a good location for the town and also good for the Village and Colgate. There may be a hybrid solution. They might be able to come up with a solution with a locations for dispatch, service, etc. Eve Ann felt that the joint purchase of fuel could provide cost savings and clarified that Birnie has its own parts business. Eve Ann stated that we need to look for collaboration. First step is that we need to find a location and Birnie does not care where it is. Suzanne asked if they are private company. Peter responded that yes, they are private. Birnie Bus initiated this conversation a year ago and recently started up again. Tim Birnie thinks a private/public partnership is the wave of the future and doing things together we would save money. Birnie would build the facility and look for long term contracts. So there is no monies up front for the municipalities. There was talk about including the school too. Margaret talked to them and they already have a contract with BOCES. Peter said that Time thinks he can handle school for 2/3 costs of school costs. Eve Ann stated that someone should pitch it to the school board because of the cost savings. Eve Ann continued with comments about the pressure from the State for shared services with local municipalities, cut costs and since maintaining equipment is a big cost, we have to explore it. We'll know once we get real numbers. Brian Hutzley thought and agreed that there may be state funds for this type of project. The building could be sustainable/green building. Margaret Miller commented that the Village too wants to see the numbers.

Codes Enforcement Report: Submitted by Paul McGinnis

Paul has issued 1 building permit. He is also getting calls for help with building projects. Eve Ann commented that hopefully as spring arrives, we will see more activity.

Claims for Payment:

A motion was made by Suzanne to pay the General bills and was seconded by Peter. All were in favor, moved carried. Chris made a motion to pay the Highway bills and was seconded by Peter. All were in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report: Donna LaMarco

We already discussed the checks from Madison County for the road fund and FEMA. Court report is at top of the report. For 2013, the Town portion of the Court funds were \$5,614. For January 2014, the town portion was \$410. There was the sale of the 2013 Chevy Pick-up which received \$26,600 from Auctions International. The new truck costs \$28,806, thus the net cost of the new truck was \$2,200. The Annual Update Document (AUD) due date has been extended to May 1 by the State. Donna continued that she and Sue met with auditors for an initial meeting. They will be back in March or April. Eve Ann asked what Donna's impression from them. Donna stated that she has a good impression of them and that they have good ideas. Also on her report was that all the taxes for the warrant have been received. Donna continued that FEMA 2013 has not been posted yet because we don't have the final number. Donna stated that Sue noted in the paperwork that the dollar figure was missing about \$40,000 in materials from what was submitted. Donna followed up with FEMA and is waiting to hear back from them. Peter asked if they are reimbursing us for our actual expenses. Bert responded with labor, materials, Sue's time and my time, contractors, etc. There was some discussion about FEMA reimbursement.

Donna continued that the Town received the gift from Colgate in the amount of \$83,624 (was budgeted for \$83,675). Eve Ann commented that snow removal will be up. Bert stated again that we are still waiting for more checks. Eve Ann asked Bert if we will have lots of over-time. Bert thinks it won't be too bad. Eve Ann asked about salt and sand. Bert said he needs to check with the salt supply but that the sand supply is okay.

Annual insurance review. Eve Ann shared with the board that the town fully vetted with three vendors. Mang, Gates-Cole and Haylor, Freyer and Coon. Ease presentation took about two hours. The good news is that our current provider lowered the premiums. After careful deliberation we have decided to stay with NYMIR via Mang Insurance. We are in the 3rd year to get an interest on the original investment paid to NYMIR when we became a member. Peter stated we understand our insurance coverage better. He continued that we now have cyber security and terrorism. There have been cases with Sovereign Citizens. They consider the government illegitimate. NYMIR covers this type of issue.

Resolution #15 was made by Peter to approve the renewal of insurance with MANG and seconded by Chris. All were in favor, motion carried.

Committee Reports:**Comprehensive Plan Committee: Chris Rossi**

The Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) has been meeting just about every other week and working on the vision statement and the focus groups. The focus groups are scheduled for Saturday, March 29, location to be determined. The groups are by invitation only and facilitated

by Nan Stolzenburg and Don, the planners. The focus groups are looking at agriculture, housing, recreation, economic development and energy.

Colgate Upstate Institute. Chris stated that they are accepting applications for summer interns. Chris does not think that the CPC needs an intern, but thinks that records retention might. Sue stated that yes, Records Retention Committee (RRC) could use another intern. RRC is still sorting records and still needs to input everything into a database. We have the database ready. By the time an intern would arrive in the summer, that person could input all the information, create the labels and label all the boxes. The thing that concerns Sue is that the lease at 20 Utica is up on May 31 and the intern starts in June. Eve Ann asked about sharing an intern? Chris thinks not this time. If there is nothing else, we'll just ask for RRC. The deadline is March 7th.

Road Use Law:

Eve Ann shared that we are very close but that we are arguing over final number on the daily charges that they will be allowed to charge when they do come here to do the road inspection. Towns want it as low as possible. Currently, we are waiting to hear back from Delta for approval on the contract. Once we sign the contract then we can get on the process of passing the road law. Eve Ann is hoping that this will happen in March/April so this spring, we can review the road conditions and then put some signs up.

Records Retention Committee:

Sue gave highlights. Sue wants to thank Regina Silvestri, Wanda Warren Berry and David Hughes for their on-going volunteer assistance. Carol Dewey and Sue have been going through papers at the town office and boxing them up, sending them over to 20 Utica for processing. It's creating more space at the town office. There has been progress at 20 Utica. David has been able to separate the more recent financial records as well as pull all the payroll records which need to be kept for 55 years. Wanda has been working on older files. We may decide to keep some of the older records even though we don't need to per the MU-1 schedule because of their historic value. Sue expressed concern that while there is progress, there is still more to do. Peter wondered if we might have more time at 20 Utica. Suzanne Collins found available space where M&M Press is located that Sue needs to investigate.

SOMAC:

Suzanne provided Profit & Loss statement to the board. Margaret Miller provided a letter of agreement for the town for 2014 and a report for the town. Margaret understood that the town wanted a monthly report and a quarterly financial. SOMAC fiscal year is June 1. Margaret highlighted that SOMAC has changed its billing company. She noted that they needed to add on paid drivers because of loss of volunteers. That they are doing better with recouping money and that they have not had to use invested funds. They are maintaining \$10,000 in their checking account. Peter asked if the reserve funds are on the Balance Sheet. Eve Ann asked that Peter and Donna meet with Tim as well as David to understand the financials and bring it back to the board before the next meeting. Resolution #16 was made by Peter that we accept the SOMAC contract for \$16,000. Motion was seconded by Chris. All were in favor, motion carried.

Partnership for Community Development – Housing/Village Development: Peter Darby

Peter shared with the board that the PCD is talking about a variety of housing issues (ie: affordable housing for the working class, young professional, and seniors). PCD is going to contact a couple of companies that do senior housing to see what kind of companies are out there and what kind of services and the costs. Eve Ann asked what kind of senior housing. Peter clarified independent living places, assisted living, and memory care (ie: Alzheimer's). Eve Ann commented that right now, folks leave our area for that kind of care. Peter continued that the PCD is researching Hamilton being a niche for people who are interested in retiring close to places with a University, and a small town. Peter thinks there is a market there because of the amenities of a college but also it's a small town. The Comprehensive Plan survey showed 67% perceived need for senior housing.

Joint Village/Town Projects and Office: Suzanne Collins/Peter Darby

Suzanne emailed Eve Ann to ask about shared services committee to see what topics we need to bring to the meeting and who is on the committee. Eve Ann was thinking that we may not need a shared services committee since we are already talking about joint projects (ie: highway, joint office space) and we don't want too many committees. Questions arose about office space with Fairmount properties. Peter feels that we are all feeling increasingly frustrated with our space. Eve Ann stated that in terms of a space, we need to look at town board needs. If we can find place to rent, be better than current space. That is our goal. It may not be long term, maybe 5-10 years while Village handles their current projects. We want to keep having conversations with the Village, and that we are still interested in combing our offices. In the meantime, we need to move on our project but keep Village informed. In the end, it was decided to continue on a project by project basis rather than a committee.

Concerns of the Town Board:

Eve Ann met with the Assessor, Rochelle Harris about the photo project. Rochelle has found someone, an assessor from Oswego County, to take the photos and they are working on an agreement. She will bring it to the next board meeting. It looks like it will come in under budget.

Eve Ann asked if there were any other town concerns. Suzanne brought up about the Village Justice position. At the last village meeting, the idea was brought up about sharing a judge for both the town and village. This can only be done in an election year. There was discussion. Margaret stated that the Village is having Jen Servidio research it.

Suzanne also has update on the 4th of July. Linda wrote a note that they have five bands signed up so far. The theme is 'Sea to Shining Sea.' Tim Noel is the Grand Marshall.

Supervisor's Report:

Eve Ann reminded that there is a hearing on 2/25, 6 pm at Hamilton Library for Utica Street property. This is part of the process of completing the environmental review. Unfortunately, the NYSDEC is telling the County that they will require two more monitoring wells for about 18 months to the two years. The NYSDEC will cover the expense but it will cost the County 10%. Whether the property is available for sale will need to be asked at the public hearing. This is a disappointment to County as they want to move it along. It is moving forward and will eventually be useful land. It is possible that it might come back to town. We will be reviewing it.

Madison County: Eve Ann was appointed to the Government Opps committee which reviews all the personnel, the contracts, the lawsuits. She is still on planning committee, which covers economic development, the environment. Madison County is getting \$4 Million dollar grant to build out the water to the agricultural and renewable energy park, which the County has been trying to build at the landfill. The environmental stage of that project has been finalized, completed and accepted. It has not been challenged by the Oneida Indian Nation. It will bring water from Oneida through the Town of Lincoln and up the hill to the landfill which will allow projects to move forward like the Johnson Lumber Company drying kiln, a greenhouse, etc.

Eve Ann also talked about the latest issue from Cuomo's office about the 2% cap and a rebate to tax payers. Discussion took place about it and that there should be some education to the public about this issue.

Eve Ann will email it to everyone so we can come up with press release and suggest that maybe we can do a joint press release with the Village. The general feeling is that Cuomo's proposal does not make sense.

Executive Session:

Eve Ann stated that the board needs to go into executive session to discuss personnel issues. At 9:15 pm, Peter made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Suzanne. All agreed, motion carried.

At 9:45 pm, Chris made a motion to come out of executive session. Seconded by Suzanne. All agreed, motion carried. A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 pm was made by Chris. Seconded by Suzanne. All agreed, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Reymers
Town Clerk