

Village of Homer Board of Trustees Meeting
September 6, 2016
6:00 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Village of Homer Board of Trustees was held at the Community Building, 53 South Main St., Homer, New York with Mayor Suits presiding.

Members present:	Mayor, Genevieve A. Suits
	Trustee, Patrick Clune
	Trustee, Edward Finkbeiner
	Trustee, Kevin Slack
	Trustee, Eugene Smith.

Also present were: Village Clerk-Treasurer, Kristin Rocco-Petrella; Village Attorney, Francis Casullo; Craig Umbehauer, CEO; Police Chief, Robert Pitman; Fire Chief, Robert Johnson; Water & Sewer Sup't., Lawrence Barber; County Legislator, Gordon Wheelock; Nancy and Sandy Samson; Steven and Bev Berry; Paul Suits; Michael Balthazar; Harry Gardner; Brad Smith from WXHC; and Don Ferris from *The Homer News*.

Mayor Suits called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence to honor the gentleman who lost his life in the September 2, 2016 building fire at 23 Main Street.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees from August 2, 2016 and the Special Meeting of August 18, 2016 were approved as submitted - **all ayes**.

Motion by Trustee Finkbeiner to pay the following bills for the month of September – **all ayes**

General Fund (A)	Vouchers 512-608	\$	139,783.15
Water Fund (F)	Vouchers 157-180	\$	4,309.27
Sewer Fund (G)	Vouchers 157-180	\$	2,774.87
Capital Projects Fund (H)	-----		-----
Comm. Dev. Fund (CD)	Vouchers 1 - 1	\$	3,350.00

ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF WRITTEN REPORTS:

CEMETERY – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Slack – **all ayes**.

CODES – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Smith – **all ayes**.

There was a question from the audience regarding the status of the new gas station owned by Rerob LLC that opened without Site Plan approval. CEO Umbehauer explained that a gas station was a permitted use. While he could go through the process of getting a summons, by the time any court proceedings would be held the Planning Board will have already met.

Mayor Suits noted that CEO Umbehauer provided a list of violation notices that were recently given for 2016, which was in addition to the 2015 report. He was also compiling a list of properties that constantly have code issues to be addressed.

DOGS – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Smith – **all ayes**.

POLICE – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Slack – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits thanked the Police Department, Fire Department and all first responders who assisted with the building fire on Main Street, which occurred Friday morning, September 2, 2016. Trustee Smith stated that he was very proud of the Fire Department and commented that their actions saved the entire block from devastation. The audience applauded their efforts.

There was discussion regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract between the Village of Homer and the Homer School District. Trustee Smith pointed out that the proposed contract provided for only one SRO. Mayor Suits and Chief Pitman concurred that the contract should include two SRO's. The appropriate changes were made to the contract to reflect such. Payment for each SRO by the School District was \$32,500.00. Trustee Finkbeiner questioned the retirement benefits for the SRO's, and how much the Village was charging the School District for use of the police vehicle by the SRO. Mayor Suits indicated that the two SRO's were already retired police officers who could only make up to a certain dollar amount per year; retirement

benefits would not be an issue for the Village. She also explained that the Village was not charging for use of the police vehicle; the SRO must have transportation between schools.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board authorized the Mayor to sign the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract between the Village of Homer and the Homer School District, effective September 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017, to provide for two School Resource Officers in the amount of \$32,500.00 each - **all ayes**.

POLICE – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Slack – **all ayes**.

Chief Pitman reported that the new 2016 Ford Taurus police vehicle was delivered and was presently being equipped with the radio equipment at Priority Fire. The vehicle would then get affixed with decals. He also explained that there was a problem with the 2012 Chevy Impala police vehicle. He was working with the State to get an exemption regarding the problem with the catalytic converter and the carbon emissions.

RECREATION – No report was submitted.

DPW – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Clune – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits explained that the Village's blue Ford pickup truck was on loan to the Police Department due to the problem with the catalytic converter in the 2012 Impala as noted by Chief Pitman. Sup't. Harter was waiting for a written waiver on emissions before repairing the vehicle. He was concerned with the use of ethanol gas in the police vehicles, which run around the clock. Mayor Suits explained that the Village currently purchases fuel from the County, which is State bid pricing. Sup't. Harter wanted to pursue the purchase of fuel from Sunoco, for the police cars specifically. Mayor Suits would have to look into the fuel prices before a decision could be made. Also mentioned in the monthly report was the damage to the Fire Department's ladder truck #531 due to the recent fire. Sup't. Harter would address the damage with the Village's insurance company and proceed with repairs.

FIRE CHIEF - Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Clune - **all ayes**.

With regard to the recent fire on Main Street, Chief Johnson thanked Mayor Suits and Chief Pitman for their cooperation during the tragedy. He stated that it was a good job done by all. He mentioned the various agencies involved and thanked them for their assistance. Mayor Suits stated she was impressed with how well all the different departments and agencies worked together under such pressure. She was thankful for all of the volunteers and the time they spent. Trustee Finkbeiner questioned whether a review would be done of the fire to discuss what could be improved upon for future events. Chief Johnson explained that a post-incident review would be conducted over the weekend. He stated that no matter what you have done, there is always room for improvement.

FIRE INSPECTOR – Report was received as submitted. **Motion** to accept by Trustee Slack – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits thanked Fire Inspector Fairchild for his assistance the morning of the fire.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Village resident, Harry Gardner, questioned whether there was any further discussion of the Village DPW merging with the Town of Homer. Trustee Finkbeiner explained that it was not in the Town's best interest to merge with the Village DPW as it would cost the Town more money.

Mr. Gardner questioned the status of the Delvecchio project on Route 281 and the windows not being to code. CEO Umbehauer explained that the issue had to do with energy compliance. Unless it was appropriately addressed, a Certificate of Occupancy would not be issued.

Mr. Gardner questioned whether parking commercial vehicles in a residential zone (Rob San Drive) was allowed as well as construction materials. CEO Umbehauer explained what was allowed in a residential zone and would look into Mr. Gardner's concern.

Lastly, Mr. Gardner requested copies of the monthly reports be provided to the public. Mayor Suits explained that the monthly reports could be made available after the meeting and offered them to Mr. Gardner. The agenda should be available and posted to the Village website prior to the meeting, however the monthly reports are not always provided in time to do so.

Michael Balthazar suggested the reports be read at the meeting. Trustee Clune explained that the meeting agenda should be available on the Village's website, as well as the draft minutes. The monthly reports are not always available until the meeting due to when they are submitted. He stated he was open for suggestions.

Village resident, Sandy Samson questioned whether the Trustees read the "Letter to the Editor" in the *Cortland Standard* submitted by a resident on Pine Street regarding the recent fire, residents of Pine Street not being able to leave their street, and the issue regarding the bridges in the Village. Chief Pitman and Chief Johnson explained the manner in which the public was allowed to leave Pine Street. Trustee Clune added that the issue was addressed after the fire was under control. The issue with the bridges must be addressed by the Town, and may be pushed to the forefront now.

Mayor Suits stated that everything the Village did was for the safety of the community as a whole; they were not trying to harm anyone. The number of first responders available in the small locality would have provided for a fast response if there had been an issue.

Trustee Slack stated that the Village should address the number of pathways out for the future. Mayor Suits agreed and stated that the issue has been brought up several times with the Town. There are currently three bridges that connect the side streets in the back; one is unusable, two are useable, however they cannot accommodate the tonnage of the appropriate fire trucks. In a previous meeting with Supervisor Forbes from the Town of Homer, Mayor Suits requested that the bridges accommodate the fire trucks so anyone in harms way could get help.

Chief Johnson added that the Village may want to investigate adding a dry hydrant to the river in the future. Chief Johnson and Water & Sewer Sup't. Barber would meet to discuss the suggestion. Mayor Suits indicated that prior to the meeting she asked Water & Sewer Sup't. Barber, who was also on scene of the fire, for an estimate of how much water was used. He estimated that 300,000 gallons were used to fight the fire.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was discussion regarding the plans for the old generator at the Fire Station. Mayor Suits explained that TLC was no longer interested in purchasing the old generator. After speaking with Chief Johnson and Mahlon Irish, the Village would hold onto the extra generator at this time. She recalled that at the Trustee's August 2, 2016 meeting, there was discussion regarding connecting the old generator to the Community Building, or the possibility of connecting the Fire Department's existing generator. Mayor Suits looked into the suggestion and requested an estimate connect the Community Building to the Fire Department's existing generator and underground service. Old Stage Electric submitted an estimate of \$9,500.00+ to make the connection (the amount did not include digging or backfill).

Mayor Suits apprised the Board she received a request from Water & Sewer Sup't. Barber for additional funds for the Clinton Street Pump Station for the relocation of the electrical service. Sup't. Barber explained the work that was being done at the Pump Station and his request to move the electrical service from the pole to an underground service. The controls would all be housed inside the new building. The Village received a quote from Old Stage Electric to perform the necessary electrical service at the cost of \$2,750.00. Mayor Suits indicated that there was money in the budget to perform the work. She visited the site with Sup't. Barber and agreed that the work should be done.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board authorized the expenditure of \$2,750.00 to Old Stage Electric for the relocation of electrical service at the Clinton Street Pump Station, as an addendum to the current contract - **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits apprised the Trustees that the Micro-Enterprise Grant Committee would meet on September 21, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the Key Bank branch in Homer to discuss the applications submitted for the grant.

Mayor Suits requested Trustee Clune discuss the proposal submitted by the Landmark Society of Cortland County for use of the History Center located at 25 S. Main Street. Trustee Clune explained that there has been a vacancy in the Historian position and the History Center has been closed. Trustee Clune stated that the Village was looking for a new Historian and before moving forward with the Landmark Society's request the position should be filled. Trustee Clune was researching the matter and suggested the Trustees also discuss compensation for the position. He mentioned that the Town of Homer Historian has a salary of \$1,300 with \$500 budget for expenses, plus dues paid for membership to relevant associations. Trustee Clune knew of a few individuals who were interested in the vacant position. He suggested the Village write a job description, move forward with accepting resumes, and to advertise the vacancy in the *Cortland Standard* and perhaps *The Homer News*. Mayor Suits requested Trustee Clune work on completing a job description that could be submitted to the Trustees and Attorney Casullo for review and approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was discussion regarding the Recreation Contracts between the Village of Homer and the Town of Cortlandville, and the Village of Homer and Town of Homer. Trustee Finkbeiner was concerned that the Village was not charging enough to the towns for the programs provided and suggested an increase in the contract prices. Mayor Suits discussed the importance of the Village Recreation Department and the programs offered to the community. She explained how the contract prices are determined, which is based on the number of participants. The contract amount is not arbitrary or capricious. She commented on the positive aspects of the program. She also informed the Trustees that she met with Supervisor Tupper from the Town of Cortlandville earlier in the day. The Town was in the planning stages for the construction of a very large recreational facility. There was a good possibility that the Village would lose funding from the Town in the future. Mayor Suits requested a motion to accept the Recreation Contracts between the Village of Homer and the Town of Cortlandville and the Town of Homer.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board authorized the approval of the Recreation Contract between the Village of Homer and the Town of Cortlandville in the amount of \$31,873.62 for the year 2017/2018, and between the Village of Homer and the Town of Homer in the amount of \$32,387.71 for the year 2017/2018, and further authorizes the Mayor to execute the contracts. – **Ayes - Clune, Slack, Smith** **Nay - Finkbeiner**

Mayor Suits requested a motion authorizing her to sign the Discharge of Mortgage between the Village of Homer and Neal and Elizabeth Smith, 32 North West Street, Homer, NY with regard to their 2002 Community Development Block Grant. Attorney Casullo explained the mortgage was actually a diminishing lien and was satisfied.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board authorized the Mayor to execute the Discharge of Mortgage between the Village of Homer and Neal and Elizabeth Smith with regard to their 2002 Community Development Block Grant for property located at 32 North West Street – **all ayes**.

There was discussion regarding vandalism occurring at Durkee Park. Mayor Suits suggested the Board discuss the possibility of installing cameras or lights to combat vandalism, which was a suggestion made by a recent renter of the park. Mayor Suits indicated that the Village did something similar at Griggs Park when vandalism was an issue. Trustee Clune agreed and suggested the Board look into the cost as well as talk with Chief Pitman for his opinion. Trustee Finkbeiner liked the idea and indicated that he spoke with City Police Chief Catalano regarding the costs of cameras in the City, which was approximately \$5,000 per camera and approximately \$15,000 for the terabytes of data. He mentioned upgrading Village lines for fiber optics and adding cameras in the future. Mayor Suits recalled that the Village has tried twice to receive a grant for such upgrades, and would continue to apply for such grants when they are available; funding is very difficult to obtain. Mayor Suits requested Trustee Finkbeiner research the installation of lights and cameras at Durkee Park to combat vandalism and report back to the Board.

Mayor Suits apprised the Board she received correspondence from the Cortland County Federation of Sportsmen's Club in connection with the Cortland Youth Bureau requesting permission from the Village for the NYS DEC to stock Durkee Park Pond with trout for the annual fishing derby. Stocking the pond would increase the fish catch opportunity for the children participating in the event. The DEC would stock the pond at no charge or inconvenience to the Village.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board authorized the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to stock the Durkee Park Pond at no charge to the Village per the request of the Cortland County Federation of Sportsman's Club and Cortland Youth Bureau for the annual youth fishing derby – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits reported that she provided the Trustees with verbiage from the City of Syracuse's law regarding curb-side dumping, which was specific to electronics. Curb-side dumping has been an ongoing issue in the Village and it may be time to address the issues by means of a local law. Trustee Clune agreed that the issue of curb-side dumping must be addressed, and suggested that the issue was twofold. First, residents should be aware of how to properly dispose of items, and secondly, there should be a local law to back it up. Trustee Slack added that there should be a proper way to enforce the curb-side dumping. Mayor Suits stated she would work with Attorney Casullo to draft a local law regarding curb-side dumping to be presented to the Board for their review at a later date.

Mayor Suits apprised the Board that the Fire Department's contract with First Responder Grants, Inc. for grant writing services was due for renewal. The Fire Department has had great success in the past with obtaining grants making it well worth the cost of the contract. Chief Johnson agreed with the importance of the grant writing contract.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board authorized the Mayor to renew the contract with First Responder Grants, Inc. for grant writing services for the Village Fire Department for the total amount of \$1,300.00 – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits announced the retirement of Bobette Lansdowne from the Village of Homer Water & Sewer Department after 21 years of service. Bobette has been an asset to the Village and will be missed. She was thanked for her dedication to the Village and wished well in her retirement.

On **motion** by Trustee Finkbeiner, the Board accepted the resignation for retirement from Bobette Lansdowne after 21 years of service with the Village of Homer Water & Sewer Department, effective August 31, 2016 – **all ayes**.

There was discussion regarding the attendance of Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) members at monthly meetings and the possible compensation of such board members to promote attendance. Trustee Clune indicated that two out of the last three ZBA meetings were cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. The members of both boards are volunteers and do not get paid. The question posed was whether compensating the members would promote attendance or not. Trustee Smith stated he has chaired both committees and there has never been a problem in the past. Trustee Slack questioned what the qualifications to be a member of either board were. Mayor Suits indicated that the members must be Village residents and have to complete 4 hours of training annually. Mayor Suits asked the Trustees to think about the possible compensation for future discussion. Trustee Clune suggested they address the current board members and ask if they still want to be on the boards, and if not search for replacements.

Mayor Suits apprised the Board she received a request from Roger Sager to be compensated for his work as the Girls Basketball Coach through the Village Recreation program. According to Mr. Sager he was compensated in previous years. Mayor Suits suggested the Board discuss the request at budget time. All coaches are on a volunteer basis with the Recreation Department.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board tabled action on the request of Roger Sager to be compensated for his work as the Girls Basketball Coach through the Village Recreation Department until the 2017/2018 budget season – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits questioned whether there was anything further to come before the Board.

Trustee Clune announced that the next Building Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Village Office.

No further comments or discussion were heard.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board recessed the Regular Meeting to an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 7:11 p.m. – **all ayes**.

No action was taken in Executive Session.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. – **all ayes**.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board authorized the increase in salary of \$1,000.00 each for both Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Karen Gaebler and Clerk Kalee Updyke, to be split into the next two pay periods, for additional work they shall incur – **all ayes**.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board authorized Attorney Casullo to offer a settlement package to two former employees – **all ayes**.

No further comments or discussion were heard.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board adjourned the Regular Meeting at 7:35 p.m. – **all ayes**.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin E. Rocco-Petrella, Clerk-Treasurer
Genevieve A. Suits, Mayor