

**Village of Homer Board of Trustees Meeting
October 4, 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; Nancy and Sandy Samson; Michael Balthazar; Stacey Pryor; Ward Dukelow; Karen Niday from the Cortland County IDA/BDC; Brad Smith from WXHC; and Don Ferris from *The Homer News*.

Mayor Suits called the meeting to order.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees from September 6, 2016 were approved with two minor corrections – **all ayes**.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board authorized the Mayor to modify the budget and transfer \$38,387.00 from Capital Reserves Sewer into the Capital Project Fund for the Clinton Street Pump Station project – **all ayes**.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board authorized the Mayor to modify the budget and transfer \$28,188.96 from Capital Reserves (General Fund) to Public Safety Equipment for the purchase of the new Police car – **all ayes**.

Motion by Trustee Clune to pay the following bills for the month of October – **all ayes**

General Fund (A)	Vouchers 609-695	\$	90,501.03
Water Fund (F)	Vouchers 181-206	\$	4,148.40
Sewer Fund (G)	Vouchers 181-211	\$	113,811.43
Capital Projects Fund (H)	-----		-----
Comm. Dev. Fund (CD)	-----		-----

ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF WRITTEN REPORTS:

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

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

Mayor Suits referenced the running list of violations and questioned the status of a few of the properties in the Village. CEO Umbehauer would follow up and mentioned that some of the violations were turned over to the Town Court. He would report back to the Board.

There was discussion regarding vacant properties within the Village and the property law. CEO Umbehauer suggested the Board discuss the registration fee for “vacant” properties in the future and potentially amending the law with regard to the \$250 registration fee. He explained that there are numerous property owners who are upset with the registration fee for their vacant properties when the taxes are paid and the properties are maintained.

Trustee Finkbeiner apprised the Board he attended a seminar regarding zombie properties at the September 2016 NYCOM conference. He explained the new zombie property law, which goes into effect December 16, 2016. For property owners who are delinquent from paying their mortgage for 90 days, the mortgagor must inspect the property every 25-35 days and determine if it is vacated or not. The vacant properties have to be registered with the State and maintained or are subject to fines of \$500 per day. Trustee Finkbeiner also mentioned that within 150’ of an abandoned property, the value of the adjacent properties decrease \$7,600; up to 450’ the value decreases \$3,500. He also suggested the Village look into land grant monies next year. The Village could purchase properties, rehabilitate and sell them.

DOGS – No report was received. Mayor Suits reminded the Board that the DCO recently had a baby.

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

Chief Pitman was pleased to inform the Board that Police car #126 would be back in service soon. He was unable to get a waiver from the State for the emissions. The vehicle was currently at Royal Motors for repair work involving the catalytic converter, the cost of which would almost all be covered under warranty. Trustee Finkbeiner questioned whether using different gas would solve the problem with the vehicles. Mayor Suits reminded the Trustees that she was looking into the possibility of purchasing gas elsewhere and pricing. The Village currently purchases gas through the County Highway Department at state bid prices.

RECREATION – No report was submitted. Mayor Suits mentioned that the Village was very close to hiring a new Recreation Director.

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

Mayor Suits apprised the Board and those in attendance that the new clock on Main Street was erect, although not yet keeping time.

In reference to the old generator that had been a topic of discussion in recent meetings, Mayor Suits apprised the Board that Sup't. Harter requested permission to connect the generator to the DPW garage. The Board was in favor of such idea.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board authorized the installation of the old generator at the DPW garage located at 2 Grove Street, Homer, New York – **all ayes**.

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

It was mentioned that the new AED was installed in the Community Building. The Fire Department was still waiting for the plaque to be hung.

With regard to the recent fire at 23 South Main Street, Chief Johnson apprised the Board he was waiting for the official report from the OFBC. Once in receipt of the report he would meet with Chief Pitman to discuss the findings. Trustee Finkbeiner questioned whether the cause of the fires were ever determined at the Budget Inn or at the house fire on Wall Street. Both Chief Pitman and Chief Johnson indicated that the causes were undetermined; however the motel appeared to be arson.

Mayor Suits thanked the Homer Fire Department for their hard work and mentioned that they have had a very busy month for fire calls.

Trustee Clune questioned whether the repairs were complete to fire truck #531. Chief Johnson explained that Sup't. Harter was coordinating the repair and that Priority Fire was on site today to provide another quote.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Mayor Suits offered privilege of the floor to those in attendance. No requests were made.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was discussion regarding the possibility of installing cameras and lights at Durkee Park to combat vandalism. Trustee Finkbeiner was researching the matter and apprised the Board he met with City of Cortland Police Chief Catalano and Deputy Chief Sandy with regard to the City's surveillance. He was also scheduled to meet with a few surveillance companies to discuss options for the Village. Trustee Finkbeiner mentioned that there was potential for future grant money. He projected the cost of surveillance was \$50,000 to get started, which was not in the budget at this time. Trustee Smith mentioned that the Brewster House recently installed surveillance cameras and suggested they be contacted as their cost of installation was much less.

There was discussion regarding the vacant Village Historian position. Trustee Clune completed a job description for the position, which was reviewed by Attorney Casullo. Once approved he suggested the position be advertised in *The Homer News*, the *Cortland Standard*, and on WXHC radio.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board approved the job description for Village Historian as submitted by Trustee Clune, and authorized the advertisement of the vacant position – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits offered privilege of the floor to Karen Niday from the Cortland County IDA/BDC, Administrator of the Village’s Micro-enterprise Assistance Program (MAP). Ms. Niday explained the application process for the MAP program and the grant review committee that came up with recommendations for the Trustees.

Ward Dukelow, Chairman of the review committee, thanked Ms. Niday for her role as administrator and explained that there were 11 applicants interested in the \$167,100 of funding; each requested approximately \$35,000 for their businesses. Mr. Dukelow explained how the committee arrived at their decision.

Mayor Suits stated that she was thrilled the Village received so many applicants for the grant money, which was not always the case. She requested a motion to accept the recommendations submitted by the MAP Review Committee allocating the grant funds.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board accepted the recommendations submitted by the Village of Homer MAP Review Committee for the allocation of funds from the Micro-Enterprise Assistance Program grant as follows – **all ayes**:

<u>New Businesses</u>		<u>Existing Businesses</u>	
Ash Décor	\$20,000	Arnolds Florist	\$20,000
Fingerlakes Touring Company	\$10,000	Bridal Barn	\$15,000
Olde Homer House	\$20,000	Eves Broadcasting/WXHC	\$18,000
Sinfully Sweet Café	\$22,500	Linani’s Inc. – Sherman House	\$ 8,600
Three Lil Birds Cakery	\$22,500	Prima Studio	\$10,500

Ward Dukelow announced the applicants and the amount awarded. Ms. Niday was very happy with the number of applicants and stated it was proof that if the Village has the opportunity to apply for another grant the funding could be used. Mayor Suits agreed that there is definitely a need in the Village as there are many people/businesses asking for funds. Ms. Niday added that uses of the grant money vary from improvements to infrastructure/buildings or equipment, and a few were to be used for inventory. For improvements to infrastructure the Village would have a 5-year lien on the property.

Trustee Clune, member of the Building Committee, gave an update on the September 7, 2016 committee meeting discussing new village office space, a summary of which was presented to the Board for review. The committee used a decision matrix and listed the 5 options outlined in the Charter as well as created 7 criteria to evaluate them. By doing so, the committee narrowed their focus down to 2 options; renovating an existing building or moving back to Homer Town Hall. The committee would focus its efforts on the two options. Trustee Clune explained that one of the committee members, himself and an architect who would do this pro-bono, would walk through the Town Hall and look at space requirements there. The next Building Committee meeting would be held on October 20, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Village Office. Trustee Clune hoped the committee would do some more “decision-looking” and establishing criteria and getting into more details as far as the actual costs. He welcomed comments and concerns from the public.

Trustee Smith, Chairman of the Committee, added that the Village has \$272,000 in a reserve fund to be used for the building. The cost of renovations to an existing building would be covered by the reserves, however the purchase price of the building would not be covered. Trustee Smith explained that the Village submitted an application to the State for a \$150,000 grant, but has not received the award. Until the Village receives notification regarding the grant their hands are tied.

Trustee Finkbeiner informed the Board that he would be calling for a vote on the matter at the November 1, 2016 Trustee Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Suits apprised the Board that she and the Clerk-Treasurer received three proposals to potentially outsource the Village's payroll services. Mayor Suits explained the three quotes varied in services; she has since asked for the quotes to be revised so they are all for the same services. Trustee Finkbeiner questioned the reason for the payroll quotes. Mayor Suits explained that the reason for looking into a payroll service was two-fold: it was time-consuming for the Village Clerk's Office, and after talking with Attorney Casullo there was an amount of liability associated with the different reporting requirements (ie: federal, state, retirement reporting). Mayor Suits hoped to report back to the Board at the next meeting. No action was taken at this time.

There was a brief discussion regarding the request submitted by Margaret Little, President of the Phillips Free Library Board of Trustees, for an increase in funding from \$27,000 to \$30,000 for the Library. Trustee Clune suggested the Board table discussion until budget time.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board tabled discussion on the request from the Phillips Free Library for an increase in funding from \$27,000 to \$30,000 until the 2017/2018 budget process – **all ayes**.

With regard to the application for membership from Tyler Ponticello to the Homer Fire Department, Mayor Suits apprised the Board they were in receipt of all required information.

On **motion** by Trustee Slack, the Board authorized the approval of membership to the Homer Fire Department of Tyler Ponticello, 24 River Street, Homer, New York, effective immediately – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits apprised the Board she received a proposal from the Cortland County SPCA to provide services to the Village of Homer on a per diem basis. If the Board chose to contract with the SPCA, Mayor Suits suggested they may need to reduce what they pay the Village Dog Control Officer (DCO). Chief Pitman explained that there were 30 incidents involving dogs last year, 2 of which involved the SPCA when DCO Anderson was not available or could not be reached. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to table action until budget time.

On **motion** by Trustee Smith, the Board tabled discussion on the request from the Cortland County SPCA to provide services to the Village of Homer on a per diem basis – **all ayes**.

Mayor Suits requested the Board take out their calendars to schedule budget workshops for the 2017/2018 budget year. After discussion the following workshop dates were established: Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.; Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.; Wednesday, November 30, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. All workshops would be held at the Village Office, 53 Main Street, Homer, New York.

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

Attorney Casullo had no new business to add.

Fire Chief, Robert Johnson informed the Board that heavy rain was in the forecast for the upcoming weekend. Members of the Fire Department would be on hand to assist with emergencies. Chief Johnson requested the Village provide food/water to the Fire Department members on call. Mayor Suits recalled that the Village provided food/water in the past during emergencies. The Board agreed.

No further comments or discussion were heard.

On **motion** by Trustee Finkbeiner, the Board recessed the Regular Meeting to an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 6:55 p.m. – **all ayes**.

No action was taken in Executive Session.

On **motion** by Trustee Finkbeiner, the Board adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. – **all ayes**.

No further comments or discussion were heard.

On **motion** by Trustee Clune, the Board adjourned the Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. – **all ayes**.

Respectfully submitted,

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