

Darren "Hal" McCabe
Mayor
Mayor@HomerNY.org

Village Office
31 N. Main Street
Homer, NY 13077
Phone: 607-749-3322
www.HomerNY.org



Village Police: 607-749-2022
Newton Water Works: 607-749-2511
Glenwood Cemetery: 607-749-3517
Streets and Parks: 607-749-3813
Recreation: 607-749-2161
Codes: 607-745-3177
Homer Fire Department: 607-749-3121

VILLAGE OF HOMER
MEETING AGENDA
November 12, 2024

- 1. Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees called to order by Mayor McCabe**
- 2. Approve Consent Agenda**
- 3. Approve Minutes – 10/22/2024**
- 4. Authorize Payment of Bills:**
 - **A Fund – Vouchers** #
 - **F&G Fund – Vouchers** #
 - **TA Fund - Vouchers** #
- 5. Privilege of the Floor**
- 6. Old Business**
- 7. New Business**
 - A. Discuss Wolf Road Properties Annexation to the Town of Homer
 - B. Discuss/Approve TenKate to Resubmit 2 FEMA AFG Grant Applications
 - C. Village Historian's Annual Report
- 8. Comments by Attorney**
- 9. Comments by Board Members**
- 10. Executive Session – Per NYS Public Officers Law, Article 7 §105**
- 11. Adjournment**

**Village of Homer Board of Trustees Meeting
October 22, 2024
6:00 p.m.**

The Regular Meeting of the Village of Homer Board of Trustees was held remotely via zoom and in person at the Homer Town Hall at 31 North Main St. with Mayor McCabe presiding.

Members present:

Mayor, Hal McCabe
Deputy Mayor/Trustee, Patrick Clune
Trustee, Edward Finkbeiner (zoom)
Trustee, Kevin Slack
Trustee, Elizabeth McGrath

Also, present were Village Clerk Dan Egnor, Francis Casullo Village Attorney, Samatha Smith Village Treasurer, Keith White Water/Sewer Superintendent, Jack Eves Homer Radio X10, Kevin Smith Cortland Voice, Lily Byrne Cortland Standard, Martin Sweeny Village Historian, Stewart Contento, Ann and Victor Siegle, Kim Allen, Robert Johnson, Stephanie and Charles Spina, Ted and Dawn Larison, Pierre Beaudry.

VILLAGE OF HOMER

Local Law No. 1 of the year 2024

A Local Law establishing a six-month moratorium regarding programmable digital signs.

Be it enacted by the Village Board of the Village of Homer as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE

Establishing a six-month moratorium on the submission and processing of applications for permits, variances or land use approvals for programmable digital signs.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

Pursuant to the statutory powers vested in the Village Board of the Village of Homer to regulate and control land use and to protect the health safety and welfare of its residents, the Village Board hereby declares a six-month moratorium on the submission and/or land use approvals for programmable digital signs. The Village Board is considering possible amendments to the Code of the Village of Homer pertaining to programmable digital and similar signs. The Village Board finds that this moratorium will allow for a careful study of this issue, consideration of the concerns of residents and businesses, drafting proposed amendments in final form, holding a public hearing and any proposed amendments and lawfully adopting and filing the amendments.

SECTION 3. AUTHORITY

This moratorium is enacted by the Village Board pursuant to its authority under New York Constitution Article IX and New York State Municipal Home Rule Law Section 10.

SECTION 4. ENACTMENT OF SIX-MONTH MORATORIUM

For a period of six (6) months following the effective date of this Local Law, except as may be provided in Section 6 below, the following moratorium is enacted:

- A. No new applications for permits, variances and/or land use approvals for a programmable sign shall be accepted by the Village Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals or Code Enforcement Officer of the Village of Homer; and
- B. No submitted application for permits, variances and/or land use approvals for a programmable sign shall be accepted or processed by the Village Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals or Code Enforcement Officer of the Village of Homer.

SECTION 5. TERM

The moratorium imposed by the Local Law shall be effective six (6) months from the effective date of this Local Law. This Moratorium may be extended by one (1) additional period of up to three (3) months by resolution of the Village Board upon a finding of the necessity of such extension.

SECTION 6. EXCEPTION DUE TO EXTRAORDINARY HARDSHIP

The Village Board may authorize exceptions to the moratorium imposed by this Local Law upon finding that postponing consideration of an application for a programmable digital sign would impose extraordinary hardship. An application for an exception shall be considered as follows:

- A. Submission of ten (10) copies of an application containing the applicant's arguments, including facts and evidence in support of the alleged extraordinary hardship, a copy of the application for the proposed programmable digital sign, and such other information and documentation deemed necessary by the Village Board to consider the application.
- B. The payment of a filing fee with the application.
- C. A public hearing on the extraordinary hardship application shall be held by the Village Board no later than 45 days after submission of a complete application and filing fee.
- D. In reviewing the application, the Village may consider the following criteria:

- a. The extent to which the proposed application for a programmable digital sign would adversely impact the character of the surrounding neighborhood or be detrimental to public health and safety.
 - b. Whether the moratorium will expose an applicant or property owner to substantial monetary liability to a third person or would leave the applicant or property owner unable to use a reasonable alternative.
 - c. Mere delay in the consideration of application for a programmable digital sign is insufficient to constitute an extraordinary hardship.
- E. Upon concluding the public hearing, and after consideration of the application and evidence submitted, the Village Board shall, in its sole discretion, approve, deny or approve in part and deny in part, the application.

SECTION 7. SUPERSEDING OF NEW YORK STATE VILLAGE LAW

To the extent that any provision of this Local Law is in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of NYS Village Law, this Local Law supersedes, amends, and takes precedence over NYS Village Law pursuant to the Village's municipal home rule powers under NYS Municipal Home Rule Law §10(l)(ii)(d)(3), 10(l)(ii)(a)(14), and 22.

SECTION 8. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS

To the extent that any law, ordinance, rule or regulation or parts thereof, including any deadlines for making decisions, interpretations or determinations, is in conflict with the provisions of this local law, this Local Law shall control, and such other laws are hereby superseded.

SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY

Any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part of this Local Law shall be adjudicated by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to such clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. SEQRA

This local law constitutes a Type II Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act in as much as it constitutes the adoption of a moratorium on land development or construction. As such this project is not subject to review under the State Environmental Quality Act.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the NYS Secretary of State.

Several residents had comments and suggestions regarding LED signs in historical Homer. On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, to enact Local Law 1 of the year 2024, Seconded by Trustee McGrath— **all ayes.**

Local Law No. 2 of the year 2024

A Local Law establishing a Stop Intersection at the intersection of Sunset Drive and Hooker Avenue in the Village of Homer.

Be it enacted by the Village Board of the Village of Homer as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE

Establishing a three way Stop at the intersection of Sunset Drive and Hooker Avenue in the Village of Homer.

SECTION 2. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

This local law is being enacted by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Homer pursuant to its authority to adopt laws under the New York Constitution, the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law and the New York State Village Law.

SECTION 3. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose and intent of this Local Law is to create a new “Stop Intersection” pursuant to Chapter 210-11 of the Code of the Village of Homer, New York, and to be added to Section 210-41 Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections. The new Stop Intersection is as follows:

Stop signs will be placed on Hooker Avenue at its intersection with Sunset Drive travelling both in the north and south directions.

SECTION 4. ENACTMENT OF STOP INTERSECTION

This Local Law will add to Section 210-41 of the Code of the Village of Homer, New York a Stop Intersection as follows:

Stop Sign on	Direction of Travel	At Intersection of
Hooker Avenue	North	Sunset Drive
Hooker Avenue	South	Sunset Drive

SECTION 5. SUPERSEDING OF NEW YORK STATE VILLAGE LAW

To the extent that any provision of this Local Law is in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of New York State Village Law, this Local Law supersedes, amends, and takes precedence over New York State Village Law pursuant to the Village's municipal home rule powers under New York State Municipal Home Rule Law §10(l)(ii)(d)(3), 10(l)(ii)(a)(14), and 22.

SECTION 6. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS

To the extent that any law, ordinance, rule or regulation or parts thereof, is in conflict with the provisions of this Local Law, this Local Law shall control, and such other laws, ordinance, rule or regulation are hereby superseded.

SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY

Any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part of this Local Law shall be adjudicated by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to such clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the New York State Secretary of State

One resident took the opportunity to speak in favor of the new stop intersection of Hooker Ave and Sunset Dr. On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, to enact Local Law 2 of the year 2024 establishing a stop intersection at the corners of Sunset Dr and Hooker Ave., Seconded by Trustee Slack- **all ayes.**

Minutes: Trustee Clune made a **Motion** to approve minutes of October 8, 2024, Seconded by Trustee Slack- **all ayes.**

On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, Seconded by Trustee Slack, to pay the following bills for 2024-2025 – **all ayes.**

➤ F & G Funds – Vouchers	# 394-414	\$70,970.05
➤ A Fund – Vouchers	# 1235-1300	\$78,057.37
➤ T&A -Vouchers	# no vouchers	

Treasurer's report: Sam presented preliminary budget findings up to June 2024.

Privilege of the Floor: not at this time.

Old Business:

The salt shed is complete and filled with salt. Dan will finish paperwork on the work the DPW put in to set up the salt shed.

Linear Park is moving forward with the final items needing to be tied up. Cortlandville must pass a resolution to convert the land from vacant commercial land to Municipal Park land.

Dam removal has been cleared by DEC but now is tied to the storm money from this summer. The Village has applied for an extension due to the storm.

New Business:

On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, to approve the applications of Kaili Young and Charles Wander to the Homer Fire Department, Seconded by Trustee Slack– **all ayes.**

On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, approve two Dell laptops quote for the Homer Fire Department, Seconded by Trustee Slack– **all ayes.**

On **Motion** by Trustee Slack, approve VFA Homer Fire Department Grant application, Seconded by Trustee Clune – **all ayes.**

On **Motion** by Trustee Clune, approve the Village Office quote for copier contract, Seconded by Trustee Slack – **all ayes.**

RESOLUTION DECLARING THREE PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE VILLAGE OF HOMER AS MUNICIPAL PARKLAND

WHEREAS, that Village of Homer (Village) applied for financial assistance from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) under the Title 9 of the Environmental Protection Act of 1993, for the purpose of funding the Route 11 Corridor Acquisition of Real Property Grant (Grant); and

WHEREAS, said Real Property consists of Tax Parcels: Parcel 1- 76.57-01-03.00, Parcel 2- 76.57-01-04.00 and Parcel 3-76.57-01-06.00/76.15-01.29.00; and

WHEREAS, OPRHP, as a condition for Grant reimbursement, requests that said Real Property be designated Municipal Parkland per Cortland County Tax Rolls; and

WHEREAS, the Village will, upon notice that OPRHP has satisfied all reimbursement requests that has been or will be submitted per the Master Contract, within thirty days designate Tax Parcels: Parcel 1- 76.57-01-03.00, Parcel 2- 76.57-01-04.00 and Parcel 3-76.57-01-06.00/ 76.15-01.29.00 as Municipal Parkland per Cortland County Tax Rolls; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village Board of the Village of Homer will hereby designate, within thirty days, Municipal Parkland per Cortland County Tax Rolls, Real Property consisting of Tax Parcels: Parcel 1- 76.57-01-03.00, Parcel 2- 76.57-01-04.00 and Parcel 3-76.57-01-06.00/76.15-01.29.00, upon notice and satisfaction of all Village Grant reimbursements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

On Motion by Trustee Clune, approve Resolution One, Seconded by Trustee McGrath – **all ayes.**

Attorney: Nothing at this time.

Comments by Board Members:

Trustee Finkbeiner likes the progress on the budgets. The park is coming along, and IDA needs to move so a dog park can move forward.

Trustee Slack planning for next year's flowers is moving forward with some improvements.

Trustee McGrath the Rec Dept has a fantastic Halloween festival planned for this weekend.

Trustee Clune is just a reminder County's hazard turn in is October 26 from 8-12 at the County recycling center. Proposition 1 for Village residents is for a program already approved and budgeted for a Village Volunteer Fireman length of service program. Town news is the doe tags will be released on November 1 and the proposed budget is out.

Questions from the Media:

Jack Eves wanted to know when the stop signs would be put up. The Mayor once filed it may take 30 days.

On Motion by Trustee Clune, the Board entered Executive session, in accordance with NYS Public Officers Law, Article 7 §105, section F. the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation; Seconded by Trustee Slack at 7:02 P.M.- **All ayes.**

On Motion by Trustee Clune, Seconded by Trustee Slack the Board exited Executive session at 7:17 P.M. **All ayes.**

On Motion to adjourn by Trustee Clune, Seconded by Trustee Slack at 7:17 PM-**All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Maureen Hoy, Account Clerk

**I do not usually prepare as detailed and diary-type report as this, but this way
I can convey the quantity and diversity of services rendered this past year.**

Local Municipal Historian's Annual Report

This report covers the time from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2024

Date Report was Prepared: November 1, 2024

Name of Municipality: Town and Village of Homer, NY

Historian's Name: Martin A. Sweeney

Date Appointed Historian: April 2008 for the Town and April 4, 2017, for the Village

Address: Town Hall, 31 N. Main Street, Homer, NY 13077

Phone (cell): 607 745-4171

Email: mapsweeney@hotmail.com OR Historian@homerny.org

Websites: Town of Homer = <http://www.townofhomer.org/> Village of Homer =
<http://www.homerny.org/>

Office Hours: By appointment

Compensation: Stipends provided to this municipal employee

Village: \$2000.00 Town: \$1685.00

Administrative Tasks – I continue to file local news clippings and issues of *The Homer News*. I continue to receive artifacts and ephemera from citizens for me to determine their fates. I make frequent trips to the Cortland County Historical Society to do research or drop off non-Homer artifacts that come my way. I continue to assist with monthly requests for genealogical information and to do research on local history, primarily for my news column in the Homer newspaper. On February 28, after conversation with Town Supervisor Parks, I crafted and submitted a Collection Management Policy to govern any art work or significant artifacts owned now or in the future by the Town of Homer and any temporary loans made or received of such items. On August 12, I transferred some items from the Town vault to the top floor storage room until we know what a refurbished Town Hall will offer in terms of appropriate, fire and water-safe storage for both the Village and Town.

Number of Office Visits (estimated): At least six

On Nov. 20, met with historian and preservationist Ed Raus to go through the archives for material written by the late R. Curtis Harris and then to take a tour of the exterior of the "Unroom" and the proposed linear park areas to discuss Raus' thoughts on the two sites as possible places for erecting the tribute in bronze to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and Homer's three "Lincoln men."

On Nov. 21, met with a *Cortland Standard* reporter to share my thoughts on the tenure of Town Supervisor Fred Forbes, who was retiring from the post at the end of the calendar year.

On February 14, met with James Stevens of Cortland who brought in a Civil War discharge paper for me to discuss with him and a multi-page document dated 1829 which appeared to be a poem about real or fictional sea adventures but bore no decipherable name or place of origin. With the help of Ed Raus, I was able to provide information about the soldier named in the document, who was from Cortland County but enlisted in Fabius, NY.

On February 20, met at my office with Nancy Hansen of the Board of the Elizabeth Brewster House. She delivered ephemera which represented merely a fraction of the historical records the House would like my assistance in processing to determine the best repository for deeds, Board Minutes, and other items now stored at the House. I agreed to come to the storage site to help make that determination. Have not received word yet.

On Sept. 27, met with Karin Snyder, Records Management Consultant, to discuss items on uppermost floor of Town Hall and to set a date to determine which require restoration, preservation, or discarding.

On Oct. 17, interviewed by a reporter at my office regarding the CNY Book Award I received.

Number of Phone/Email Inquiries Received/Answered (estimated): Over twenty-one

Note the range of inquiries made of my office beyond nearly monthly requests for genealogical information not listed here:

On Nov. 5, received an emailed request from the Cortland County Historical Society for permission to issue a reprint of my book *Murder in the Winter Solstice* which I did as a fundraiser a few years ago for the Society. I granted permission.

On Nov. 8, received phone call from a woman in New Mexico who wanted guidance in finding a museum in the Homer area willing to accept a donation of a large 18th century loom, bench, and spinning wheel she had acquired at auction in the Town of Homer back in the 1970s. I directed her to CNY Living History Center.

On February 15, received an email from Stephen Tulowiecki, Ph.D. of Geneseo, seeking any knowledge of descriptions of wildland fires in my area that had been caused by Native Americans. I have no knowledge of this.

On March 11, received an emailed notice from Chief Pitman regarding the thought put into a new design for patches to be worn by the Homer Police Department with a historical motif.

On March 13, received a phone call from a local realtor wanting to know if I knew the owner of the Circus House and if the structure was listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. It is not but it is listed on the Historic American Buildings Survey.

On March 14, received notice from David Quinlan that the Tully Historical Society wished to have an article written by me for their newsletter showing the connection between their Esther Matilda Tallman and Homer's portrait painter Francis Bicknell Carpenter. I crafted the requested piece that afternoon. I am not aware that it was ever used in a printed publication.

On March 14, received a phone call from the former Sally Briggs of Homer, now a resident of Charleston, SC, who discussed a landscape painting she has by one of the famous Carpenter women of East Homer. A lengthy conversation ensued in which she shared her deep appreciation for all that has been done to maintain the historical charm of the village of Homer. (See acquisitions.)

On March 17, St. Patrick's Day, proved to be lucky for this historian of Irish descent. By reaching out to Linda Merrill Arthur of Skaneateles, NY, whose grandmother was my grade five teacher, Doris Merrill, the Town of Homer will be donated two portraits by Carpenter – images of a Gideon and Electra Hobart, who are buried in Glenwood Cemetery. Time of transfer was not specified, and she did not respond to any messages I left. In August, I sent a letter by snail mail. She responded with her intent to donate the portraits at some future time. She has done so.

On May 8, received a phone call from Jennifer Liber Raines, a project coordinator for the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society's *Digitize New York* program. "Digitize New York" is a free program offering to digitize municipal minutes and other documents of genealogical significance for online public access. I am thinking all of the Village and Town Minutes should be digitized by this service which operates out of Syracuse. I forwarded this opportunity to the Town and Village. I learned the Town has already digitized everything of historic value in the Town vault but has yet to make it accessible online to the public.

On June 7, interviewed by phone for half an hour by Tracy Vernier on how to incorporate heritage tourism into the proposed Cortland County Development Plan. The final plan makes no reference.

On June 26, received a call from a resident of East Homer who had been told she could not change a window in her home (circa 1840s) without permission from the Town of Homer's non-existent Historical Commission. I set her straight on the matter.

On July 24, received an emailed request from a radio reporter to be interviewed live about the newly acquired 1834 map of New York State for the Board room of Town Hall. I declined on grounds of insufficient information to make an interview worthwhile to his listeners.

On August 6, received an emailed request from a *Cortland Standard* reporter for information on Brockway trucks originating in Homer.

On August 16, received an email from the major biographer of Cortland's Henry Randall, Richard Schieffelin, seeking advice on how to go about having an historic marker placed at 18 Tompkins Street in the city of Cortland, Randall's former residence. Among other things, Randall authored a definitive biography of Thomas Jefferson and helped to create what is now the college in Cortland. I emailed back directly with directions for such a project.

On September 3, interviewed via phone by a *Cortland Standard* reporter about the significance of the Homer Historic District, how it is maintained, and the impact the DRI will have on it.

In mid-Sept., received via email an offer from “Bud” Jermy, the president of the Cortland County Historical Society to nominate me to membership on the Society’s Board of Trustees. After careful thought and consultation with others, I responded with my declination based on personal and professional reasons I cited. Mainly, I did not want to risk my current pleasure in research and storytelling being tarnished by the “business” of story-telling and operating a museum. I have had enough “board experience” when serving on the Homer School Board.

On Oct. 7, received an emailed request from a Cortland news reporter for the reasons I was participating with historians and historical societies in the county that week for the first time in the State-sponsored Path Through History events.

On Oct. 8, received an emailed request from Phillips Free Library to attend a program on local authors on Nov. 2. I had to decline because of my commitment to attend the DAR’s unveiling of a memorial in Courthouse Park in Cortland to Revolutionary War soldiers of the county.

On Oct.21, received a phone call from Roger DeMuth, professor of illustration at Syracuse University and resident of Cazenovia seeking information on Jedediah Barber’s Mansion which will be the subject of a painting he intends to do. We exchanged emails. He could be a valuable resource in the future.

On Oct. 21, received another communication from Richard Schieffelin of Virginia seeking assistance in getting a historic marker for the William Randall residence on Tompkins Street in Cortland. I communicated ideas to Kate O’Connell, City of Cortland Historian, but I am under the impression the owners of the house do not want a marker out front.

Late Oct., received a request from an Ithaca radio station to be interviewed after the general election about receiving the 2024 CNY Book Award for Non-fiction. I have agreed.

Number of Municipal Meetings Attended (Town/Village Board, County Legislature, Zoning, Planning, Work Sessions, etc.): Ten

On November 8, I presented my annual report to the Town Board. The report was then presented Nov. 14 before the Village Board. At both meetings I explained how the connection was made between Homer’s Sig Sautelle Circus and the Wharton Bros. Moving Picture Studio in Ithaca in 1915. At the Village meeting I gained direction on the future status of the “tribute in bronze” to Homer’s Lincoln men I had worked on for over a decade.

On Dec. 6, attended a retirement send-off for Town Supervisor Fred Forbes, who held the post for the past two decades and made local history in his own right.

On March 13, attended the Town Board meeting to obtain directions regarding proposed treatments for a Carpenter portrait by the West Lake Conservators firm. Directions were provided on how to proceed, and a Collections Management Policy I drafted was submitted and was to receive further scrutiny by the next meeting.

On April 10, attended Town Board meeting to recommend the addition of the words “and Artifacts” to the proposed “Loan Agreement” to be in keeping with wording of the Collection Management Policy. I also urged the new Board members to do diligent homework before the next meeting on the advantages and disadvantages of new billboards along Interstate 81.

On May 8, attended the meeting open to the public for comment on proposed resolution regarding installation of billboards on I-81 in the Town of Homer. I stayed for the regular Board meeting since the matter of the Arts/Artifact Collection Policy and Loan Agreement were to be voted upon. They were approved.

On July 9, attended Village Board meeting to register my continued objection to the use of LED signs within the Historic District and to voice appreciation for work of the Recreation Director and of the Dept. of Water and Sewer.

On Aug. 14, attended Town Board Meeting to present the Carpenter portrait of Esther Tallman upon its return from conservation treatment by West Lake Conservators of Skaneateles.

On Sept. 24, attended Village Board meeting to discuss what I learned about how other communities in NYS with historic districts deal with policy or ordinances on use of LED signs.

On Oct. 9, reported to the Town Board on the donation of two more portraits by Homer’s Francis B. Carpenter and the need for conservation work and installation of a surveillance camera in the area of the stage at the Town Hall.

On Oct.22, attended Village Board meeting to provide input on the issue of programmable digital signs within the Historic District. I submitted a document on it being a values clarifying moment for the community.

Please briefly describe your work over the past year in the sections below. Leave blank any sections that do not apply. Use more space if needed.

Number of Meetings out of Office: twenty

On Nov.4 and May 11, attended gathering of municipal historians of the county at the Cortland County Historical Society to network and share suggestions and challenges each has faced in recent years.

On Nov.15, was given a tour of the former residence of Jedediah Barber, Homer’s first permanent merchant. A former student of mine owns the place now.

On Dec. 22, I journeyed with David Quinlan and his brother Vince to Pompey, NY, to see the gravesite of Patrick Quinlan, whose murder in Homer on this 129th anniversary has never been solved. At the grave I read the passage for Dec. 22, 1894, from my book *Death in the Winter Solstice*.

On January 30, went to West Lake Art Conservation Center in Montville, NY, to deliver the Carpenter portrait of Esther Matilda Tallman for their evaluation of what can be done to repair the frame and lightly clean the portrait. They will provide a list of recommendations and the respective costs for the Town of Homer to choose from. The Board approved the conservation be

done. An anonymous donor picked up the bulk of the cost, and the portrait was retrieved on July 23, as noted above.

On January 30, after research done that day at the Cortland County Historical Society on the Homer Universalist Church that once existed on S. Main in the village, I delivered the paltry amount of material that exists on the subject to Victor Siegle, who had asked for what I could find.

On February 23, at the invitation of Martsje Vanderschaaf-Riehlman, Director of Phillips Free Library, I met at the library to examine a 1-inch-thick binder found in the library's attic. It was a rare treasure: provided in 1938 by Ina Hurlbut Bird cataloguing the furniture and utensils of the earliest pioneers that had been donated to the library for permanent exhibition back in 1935. I gave my opinion of what should be done with it and was invited to attend a meeting of the Board to discuss options. Sadly, the many artifacts themselves had likely been auctioned off to fund renovations to the library.

On March 18, I attended the meeting of the Board of Phillips Free Library and gave my opinion of the binder's contents and what could be done with it to make it part of the education of Homer pupils in grades 4 and 7. I was invited to help them pursue the making of a booklet about some of the contents of the binder, and I accepted. On April 3, I digitally submitted my two-page report to the director of the library, detailing what should be included in a reprint of the contents of the binder. On May 31, I went to American Printing on Rte. 281 for an estimate and delivered it to the library that afternoon. I heard nothing more until Oct. 28, when I received for the archives a copy of a nicely assembled booklet, "Life in the Age of Homespun" with a preface I had written. Max Graphics did the print job.

On June 7, attended a new interactive exhibit at Cortland County Historical Society to try my hand at matching five pieces of artwork with five different local Carpenter artists. I misidentified two landscape paintings.

On July 2, met with both the Postmistress and owner of the old firehouse to see if they were aware the cupolas on the buildings needed paint, repairs, or replacement.

On July 16, per request from two different persons, I met with Jean Quinn, owner of Arnold Florist, to go over maps of 1855 and 1876 to determine property lot(s) of what was to be a future floral shop on Cayuga Street and to see the curio case of historic artifacts she had set up.

On August 8, met at the Town Hall with Karen Snyder and the Village's summer intern, Matthew Fagerheim, to see the progress made to date on purging Village records and determining what items needed to be saved or restored before the current vault is removed during renovation of the basement. I was handed a box with four checks in pristine condition from the bank of Jedediah Barber dated 1867 and an undated token good for a five-cent cigar. On Oct. 2, met with the Village Clerk and Karin Snyder to again fine-tune our assessment of what Village records needed to be rehabilitated and what needed to be kept for historical purposes, preferably in a vault shared by the Town and Village.

On Sept. 19, attended a meeting called for public input on the future use of the Little White Church on the Green. I was asked to present a brief history of the building at the opening. I suggested that it house a gallery of Carpenter's portraits, similar to Paris Barber's proposed octagonal building on the

Green in 1846. Afterward, Linda Dickerson Hartsock requested a copy of my history of the church. This I emailed two days later.

On Sept. 25, from home via videoconference I entered into discussion with representatives of the Brooklyn Borough President's Office and the NYC Art Commission. At the urging of David Quinlan, the inquiry was if Homer could have the Carpenter portrait of Thomas Tallmadge (now in a closet of a former jail in a Brooklyn municipal building) donated to the Town. I gave six reasons for the request. They stated a long-term loan (ten years) could be possibly arranged if the Borough approved and the Town of Homer picked up the cost of packaging, insuring, and shipping. But an outright donation was rarely granted by the City of New York, as I anticipated would be their response.

On Sept. 27, met with historians of the County at the History Center at Key Bank to finalize plans for participation in the state's Path Through History in October.

On Sept. 27, met with Vickie Delaney at her Frame Shop in Cortland to retrieve a framed copy of Shirley Jones' remarkable paper-cutting of the Homer Green that had sustained broken glass.

On Sept. 28, met with historians of the county at the Cortland County Historical Society to share happenings and future plans in our respective municipalities.

On Sunday, October 13, met in person with Larry and Sylvia Nye of Little York to set a date and location for the Pomeroy roadside marker to be installed near the Little York Schoolhouse built in 1861.

Exhibits: none this year

School Classroom Lectures/Presentations: none this year

Public Lectures/Presentations: I was invited to give a talk on Feb. 22 to the local Elks Club and their guests on "Why Local History Matters." I planned to explain the job of a public historian, my goals in that position, and how the community could benefit economically from heritage tourism. No one showed up except the Elk who invited me and his wife. I attributed the no show to inadequate publicity and rainy weather. I suggested we try again in warmer weather, and I would help with advertising. I felt sorry for the man because his fellow Elks let him down. My prepared presentation did not go to waste, because...

On April 9, I used the presentation for a talk with The Finger Lakes Bottle Collectors Association. I was invited only five days before, but I brought a few of my own prized collectible historical autographs and enjoyed interacting with these antique enthusiasts.

And on June 11, I used a modified version of the presentation, along with David Quinlan, at the Elizabeth Brewster House for a requested evening talk on Homer's history.

Months in advance my mail carrier invited me to speak on the history of Cortland County at a convention on June 23 at Greek Peak of NYS Rural Mail Carriers. I was told I would get a call from a leader of the organization. I prepared a presentation but heard nothing. June 23 passed without any communication. Later, I asked the mail carrier about it. He said too many speakers had been lined up and I was among those removed to lend brevity to the meeting.

On the evening of June 26, I gave a walking tour of the area around the village's business section and the Green to two representatives of the Preservation Association of Central New York (PACNY). There was light rain, but all had umbrellas (I furnished an umbrella for one of the visitors). What impressed them most was the sign in front of the Homer Center for the Arts indicating the show with Keifer Sutherland was SOLD OUT.

On September 16, by request, I was the main speaker at a Zoom meeting of the Homer Class of 1970. I provided "A Walk Down Memory Lane with the Class of 1970," which was well received by a few classmates. They want me to do it again live when the Class has its 55th reunion next summer.

On Oct. 10, 11, and 12, gave walking tours as part of Homer's venue in the NYS Path Through History celebration. One family came from Auburn, NY.

Historical Publications: I continue to run a column on Homer history in *The Homer News*, which is published every other week. On January 16, I was invited to submit an article on the little white church on the Green for an annual publication put out by the Homer Center for the Arts and for a communication Joe Cortese wanted to send the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese to gain her support of a second attempt to obtain grant money to save the church structure. I submitted a first draft before the day was out and continued to revise it to succinctly express Homer's "love affair" with the historic edifice. Later, we were able to include proof Trinity Church in Manhattan had donated \$500 for the building of the church in 1832-33. That would be equal to \$1.8 million in today's currency. It proves the historical importance of anchoring an Episcopal church in Central New York in the 1830s.

On April 23, I was informed by a member of the Sennightly Club that the Homer Junior High School librarian had requested through the club's book donation project a copy of two of my books on local history. Each Homer school librarian is allowed to request two titles. I am pleased and honored by the selections made.

On May 30, as part of research on a murder that occurred in 1931 in Homer, I received directions from Homer farmer "Bud" Weddle and trekked through woods to the site of the crime. Off of Rte. 281 on the way to Little York, it is a circular pond known as "Mud Lake," which does not appear on all maps and according to lore is a bottomless quagmire that once swallowed a yoke of oxen and a sled when ice harvesting took place there. I wrote about it in my news column.

In June, the article a former student wrote for my news column on the history of milk processing and transporting from Homer was published in a periodical on railroading. That issue of *The Diamond* arrived in mid-September and with the amazing photos will add greatly to the Municipal archives.

In late July, signed a contract for the publishing in 2025 of *More Stories from the Heart of Central New York*, a companion volume to my earlier book, *The Heart of Central New York*.

On Sept. 25, I was informed by the Syracuse YMCA that for their annual CNY Book Awards my biography of Albert Haskell Jr. was one of three finalists in the non-fiction category. On Oct. 3, the book was announced as the recipient of the 2024 CNY Book Award in Non-Fiction.

On Oct. 23, I was honored to write an introduction for an insightful book by Richard Palmer on early stagecoach travel and taverns in Cortland County with pictures. I edited it for him. He hopes to have it published.

Historical Events/Celebrations: WinterFest 2024 gave me an opportunity to join the Cortland County Historical Society and Civil War historian Ed Raus in promoting books on local history.

Historic Preservation Projects: See the above “Historical Publications” on efforts to preserve the former Calvary Episcopal Church as a future community center.

I was asked for my assessment on July 31, of the salvageability of an old vital statistics book (1880-1905) found in the Village vault (yes, if not cost prohibitive to the Village).

On Oct. 24, sought advice from the SHPO field rep assigned to Cortland County regarding the installation of programmable digital signs within the Historic District that had been so designated at the State and National level back in 1972. SHPO frowns upon such a proposal but it is left up to public pressure and local ordinances to do the correct thing.

On Oct. 28, at the request of Nancy Hansen and Michael Kilmer I began the application process for grant money from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation for a historic roadside marker for the Elizabeth Brewster House on Main Street that originated in 1891 as the County Home for Aged Women and with a built space that will be 125 years old next year.

The next day, Oct. 29, I was present when a historic marker project that commenced in 2022 came to fruition. The old school house in Little York now has a commemorative marker. It was a real team effort, as the next article for *The Homer News* will detail.

Heritage Tourism Projects: I have reached out via email to the following for possible funding of the tribute in bronze project: David M. Rubenstein, Matthew Norman, Corning Glass, Danny Nozell (manager for Dolly Parton), Heather Norman, Joseph Fonzi (Chair of North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Committee), The Micron Foundation, Phil Knight of Nike Footwear (negative response rec'd on 6/2/2024), Benjamin Sio the Sr. VP of policy and planning for CenterState CEO, NYS Senator Leah Webb, Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana, National Sculpture Society (negative response), The Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation, NYS Council for the Arts, the Mellon Foundation (specializes in funding monuments). No responses unless otherwise indicated above. But, I did speak with Sen. Webb's constituent liaison, Whitney Hargett, at an in-person meeting at the Town Hall on June 10. She was impressed and said she would see what support the senator could bring to bear to gain funding for the monument project. A list of funding organizations was provided by a representative of the Senator, which included the Mellon Foundation. Emailed a request to the Foundation to be invited to apply for funding. After weeks, the reply was negative on Oct. 28.

Conferences/Workshops Attended:

On Nov.16-19, attended the annual Lincoln Symposium of the Lincoln Forum in Gettysburg with Homer's David Quinlan. The maquette of the “tribute in bronze” was taken along at the request of the sculptor Frank Porcu, who was attending and exhibited the model along with his

sculptures of Lincoln and Grant. I got to meet many Lincoln scholars, including Doris Kearns Goodwin who signed two of her books I had brought from home.

On April 25, attended a program in Aurora, NY, presented by the Preservation League of NYS. The title was "Historic Preservation in Small Communities."

On May 4, attended the annual meeting of Region 9 Historians of the Association of Public Historians of NYS held in Fabius, NY. Presentations were made about resources available to public historians via Byrd Library at Syracuse University and Onondaga Historical Association.

On May 8, gained information on the intricacies of local historic preservation resources through a webinar presented by the NY Planning Federation and State Historical Preservation Office.

On May 14, attended a talk on the Swards of Auburn, NY, at a meeting of the Finger Lakes Bottle Collectors Association held at CNY Living History Center.

On June 12, attended Tony Kissell's talk at Cortland County Historical Society on baseball history in the Homer-Cortland area, which included baseball scout Dewey Griggs and the Homer Braves at the Municipal Stadium.

Acquisitions:

On Nov. 4, received from the CCHS two laminated photos of McDonald-Crocker Farms activity on East River Road in Town of Homer in early 1900s.

In early Nov., received from Fred Forbes a 32-page booklet titled "Forget-Me-Not," a memorial booklet dedicated "in memory of Julia Sypher Merriam," upon the death of the Congregational Church minister's wife on May 8, 1933. Quite an extraordinary tribute with photos and in pristine condition.

On Nov. 20, Ed Raus donated a photo copy of a news article indicating Homer's Sig Sautelle did, in fact, have circus scenes filmed in Homer by the Wharton Brothers in 1915.

In November, received a packet of letters from the late Leo J. Bailey to the present owner of his Preble home, Catherine Marks Scott, to go into the archives on Bailey the WWI doughboy and Homer science teacher.

On December 18, received a large envelope of old newspapers in good condition from Barbara Shoemaker, former historian for the Town of Spafford.

On December 20, met at my office with Ed Raus to receive Volume III of Roger Curtis Harris' three volumes of research on the history of Homer. Mr. Raus pulled together from different organizations the well-dispersed Harris files into a huge, three-volume set to be housed at the Cortland County Historical Society. Raus' extraordinary compilation makes for a handy-to-use resource for future historians. Volume III is Harris' photographic collection. A copy of this volume was provided to the Homer Historian, The History Center at Key Bank, and the Cortland County Historical Society. Mr. Raus should be commended for his efforts.

On December 21, received a Christmas card from a high school classmate, Jeannie Briggs. Enclosed was a statement showing her genealogical connection to Joseph Beebe, the area's first

settler of European descent. There was also a photocopy of an 1871 deed for a plot at Glenwood Cemetery signed by Paris Barber, creator of the cemetery and first president of the cemetery association.

In February, I received from David Quinlan printed information on one Samuel Hoar, Sr. who was likely buried in Glenwood and was believed to have participated with a militia from Lincoln, MA, in exchanging gunfire with the British at the battle at the famous Concord Bridge on April 19, 1775. I contacted the museum in Concord for more information on the gentleman, so I might tie Homer into the American Revolution during the forthcoming national celebration of the 250th anniversary of the struggle for independence. There were two Samuel Hoars, but our man is not connected to the Concord Bridge incident. Homer's Samuel Hoar legally changed his name to Hobart in 1831.

On March 11, received a copy of an undated news photo from Chief Pitman showing the Curries of Preble unloading firewood on the farm in Preble where David Hannum was born. This was placed in the Hannum file of the municipal archives.

On March 12, acquired three examples of the newly designed patches for the Homer Police Dept. to go into the archives. Six days later, I received examples of the old patches that had been worn.

On March 18, received via mail from the Sally Briggs Maitland mentioned above one of the original copies printed up in 1954 of "The Cooking Secrets of Nellie Randall." She had been the head cook for the Joint Chiefs of Staff during World War II and had operated dining establishments in Homer and Skaneateles. This copy was handed over to the History Center at Key Bank.

On April 1, the Village of Homer received a donated, framed print of several historic sites in Homer from Homer's Susan Kerr, which was suitably placed on the wall nearest the entrance to the Board Room at the Town Hall.

On April 1, received from Homer's Phillips Free Library special glasses for observing the rare total eclipse of the sun. These have been archived with a note explaining their use on April 8, 2024.

On April 25, received from David Quinlan a print of the statistical map Carpenter painted in his Emancipation painting showing the extent of slavery in the South, which allowed Lincoln to plan military movements to carry out his emancipation policies.

On June 3, the Village office handed over two artifacts that had been discovered in the Town Hall: the 1952 Constitution and By-Laws of the Homer Fire Department and a First National Bank check for \$30 payable in December of 1883 to David Hannum. These have been archived at the Town Hall.

Received a letter dated June 20 along with a copy of a photo sent by Joel Mercer. It showed Joel's grandmother and her class in the West Homer one-room school circa 1913. My father was born in 1922 and attended this school.

In July, through auction, the Village of Homer acquired an 1834 Map of New York State by Burr showing the village and town of Homer in the year before the Village was officially incorporated. This is the oldest professionally produced map in the Town Hall.

On July 13, Brian Kiely, a distant relative from Lake Champlain, donated ephemera from the Academy Class of 1926, news clippings, photos of Homer's Dewey Griggs, and Truxton items. Appropriate repositories were found for every item.

On July 16, my cousin Karen Prince delivered items that our Aunt Barbara Crandall, former Deputy Town Clerk, now residing in The Nottingham in Jamesville, NY, wished me to determine if any should be archived in Homer or the Cortland County Historical Society. I have done so. A framed print of the Homer Green created from a *scherenschnitte* (black and white paper cutting) by the late Shirley Bouwer Jones of Homer now hangs in the central hallway of the Homer Town Hall. A few days later, another paper cutting by Shirley Jones was donated to the Village and now hangs at the entrance to the Assessor's and Historian's offices.

On July 26, a copy in pristine condition of the 72-page "Historical -Industrial Edition" of the *Cortland Standard* of Sept. 20, 1910, was donated to the Municipal Archives by Katherine Seibert Donlan of 18 N. Main Street. Copies of this edition had been stored in the attic of the *Cortland Standard* building in Cortland, NY, since 1910. Material on Homer is included.

On August 25, Ed Raus of Homer donated photocopies of local newspapers' reports of the fire destroying the Raymond Hotel in Little York in 1900 and a description of Little York in 1887 written by a young Lillian Pratt.

On Sept. 22, Linda Merrill Arthur of Skaneateles donated to the Town two framed portraits of a married Homer couple rendered by Carpenter circa 1861-62. She also donated genealogical material, a booklet kept by the male subject of the paintings, and two framed ads from 1890s for the Merrill clothing store located in the Union Building on Main Street. What a day for historical treasures!

Respectfully submitted,

Martin A. Sweeney

cc: The County Historian & the State Historian