

March 14, 2011

The regular meeting of the Town Board of Vernon was held at the Town Office Building on the above date with the following persons present: Myron J. Thurston, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Mick McDonough, Sandy Williams and Randy Watson, Council members. Also present: Art Freemire, Superintendent of Highways; Norman E. Laube, ZBA Chairman; Garold Vanderwerken, Mike Kaiser of PAC 99, Bill Croll, John Douglas Sr., Bev Mackey, Dion Roman, Chris McLain, Michael Hennessy, County Legislator. Attorney Rossi was absent.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting was called to order by Supervisor Thurston at 7:00 PM.

Supervisor Thurston stated that he knew the minutes from the February 14, 2011 meeting had been received by council members and asked if there were any additions or corrections. Williams mentioned that in the Good of the Order where Bennati stated that we are going to implement the timekeeping system for the highway department, should be that we are "not" going to implement it. A motion to approve the minutes with this change was made by Bennati, seconded by McDonough. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Judge Croll announced that Louise Snyder is leaving employment as the Town's Court Clerk and we have screened and hired Cindy Nell as her replacement, who has had some training in the past. We will be saving about \$1.47 an hour, but we will be losing more experience than what that \$1.47 an hour is worth. Last year we did 1,363 cases, 36 DWI's and State reports need to be done every month, and that experience is really needed. Kristi Meyers will stay on as a backup. The Court Clerk's hours will be changed to Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Dion Roman from AYSO and Chris McLain from Odyssey requested the use of the land behind the Town pavilion for their soccer practices. They are working together for player development, not just to win, but to grow as a person and a player and participate in activities that they can take ownership in. They heard that this site is possibly big enough for a couple of fields. Supervisor Thurston said that it is larger than a football field and the dream of the Town from the beginning was that it would be used for soccer. They would like to develop the field, and they do have insurance and will give the Town a copy. The Town Board was very pleased to grant this request.

John Douglas asked if anything has been done on developing a lighting district for Stuhlman Road. Supervisor Thurston replied that he has contacted Vernon Downs and they thought it was a good idea but they have been busy with their expansion, so he will get a hold of them again. Also, would the Board write a letter to the State regarding the bridge on Stuhlman Road being unsafe and in dire need of repair and Supervisor Thurston replied that he would do that.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, SWOCO, Supervisor's and Economic Development: Watson set up meeting for area businesses regarding signage for March 29, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., Watson also mentioned that someone spoke to him about a new business coming to the area in the medical field. They are looking for some land and if there's any tax incentives for them. Supervisor Thurston said that he would talk to them and help them any way we can.

There were no reports from Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Assessors, Education and Libraries, Intergovernmental Relations, Operations, Highway Superintendent and Historian.

County Legislator's Report: Mr. Hennessy reported:

- 1) there will be a meeting with County representatives on March 19, 2011 at 10:30 a.m. at the Vernon Town Office Building with a question and answer session for anyone who would like to attend.
- 2) the County Executive is proposing a change in the format for sharing sales tax. Supervisor Thurston commented that this loss of revenue, together with the loss of the

VLT money would be devastating to our Town's budget and we don't have anywhere to pass this off except to the taxpayer.

- 3) he had a meeting with the State lottery group and they agree with us regarding the possibility of a new Harness Racing-Racino in Syracuse, but NYS Racing and Wagering may have to give them a license since they are beyond a 25 mile radius. So, they are trying to change the law so that they have to be beyond a 50 mile radius.

A motion to accept above reports was made by McDonough, seconded by Watson. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pay bills was made by Williams, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

BUSINESS:

Supervisor Thurston said that he sent a letter to NYS Racing and Wagering in opposition to Horse Racing-Racino application in the Syracuse area, stating that this would have an enormous impact on Vernon Downs and possibly neither one would survive.

A motion to approve 2011 Prospect St. Water District Maintenance agreement with the City of Oneida for \$7650.00 was made by Bennati, seconded by Williams. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Report was received from O'Connell and Aronowitz regarding Land Into Trust litigation for January and February.

Supervisor Thurston stated that the 2012 budget is going to be "interesting" and he would like to keep the Board informed during the year. He presented the Board with a pie chart that the bookkeeper made showing 2010 expenses and salaries for their review. We can cut about \$100,000, but it is a bare bones budget.

A motion to audit the Town books on March 21, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. was made by Bennati, seconded by Watson. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to publish bid for salt/sand elevator per completion of plans and approval of Town Attorney made by Watson, seconded by Williams. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

An Employee Manual was given out by Supervisor Thurston to each Board member to review and discuss at the next Board meeting. Then we will give it to Attorney Rossi to look over for any legal advice we may need. We will also look at updating our Procurement Policy at the next Board meeting.

Supervisor Thurston gave the Board members a copy of the contribution formula from the NYS and Local Employees' Retirement System.

Fourth quarter sales tax amount for 2010 was received and is about \$25,000 more than last year.

Supervisor Thurston reminded everyone that April's Board meeting was changed to April 18, 2011.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Williams mentioned that she spent some time with Amanda Willson in Florida, who designed the Town Park. She has her degree in Architect Landscaping and has designed 2 parks in Florida and they are absolutely fantastic.

Judy Bachmann brought the book that she made to bring to Albany regarding the Land Into Trust litigation. The book is called "Voices From Across America" and consists of narratives from individuals, groups, and municipalities across the country exposing the Federal Indian Policy problems Americans struggle with daily.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:12 p.m. was made by Williams, seconded by McDonough. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Additions to minutes on file
in Town Clerk's Office.

Julie A. McElroy
Town Clerk

It should be noted that this meeting was tape recorded and is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None