

Regular Monthly Meeting, Hillsdale Town Board
Tuesday, July 15, 2008

I. Call to order

Supervisor Art Baer called to order the regular meeting of the **Hillsdale Town Board** at **7:30 pm** on **July 15, 2008**, in the **Hillsdale Town Hall**. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Attending

The following persons were present: Supervisor Baer, Board Members Ann Baldwin, Carmen Barbato, Peter Cipkowski, and Augie Sena; Town Clerk Julie Kane, and 9 members of the public.

III. Committee Reports

- a) **SEWER COMMITTEE:** Mr. Sena reported that all contractors are working and that all tanks are in except one for a resident who does not want a tank installed. He added that restoration is going on and that the contractors are doing a good job. He also reported that the Town has used the entire Small Cities grant and is heavily into the EFC loans. Approximately \$1,400,000 has been expended. Mr. Sena also stated that the Town is undergoing a Federal audit of the Sewer Project.
- b) **PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE:** Mr. Cipkowski reported that he had had a meeting with Ed Cooks at the Roe-Jan Park to introduce the idea of migrating the Town Youth Program to the new Park. Many possibilities were discussed, but there are many details to be addressed. Mr. Cipkowski stated that the Town should have a plan for the Hamlet Park before attempting to determine the uses of the Roe-Jan Park.

Mr. Cipkowski reported that problems had arisen with the boat structure in the Hamlet Park and that he and the Youth Director would continue to monitor the situation.

ROE JAN PARK: Mr. Cipkowski reported that there had been over 500 attendees at the official opening of the Roe-Jan Park and that over \$1100 had been raised that day at the "Giving Tree." Additional events have been planned and are posted on the kiosk at the Park and on the Town web site.
- c) **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:** In the absence of Richard Briggs, Highway Superintendent, Art Baer summarized from Mr. Briggs's written report, saying that the rising cost of petroleum products was straining the Department's budget and that discretionary blacktopping was being curtailed. Mr. Baer expressed the hope that the Town would have an easy fall so that expenses could be postponed until the next budget year.
- d) **BUILDING DEPARTMENT:** Mr. Sena reported that the Building Department was running well and that the staff had begun to reorganize the files by property ID number. He added that electrical service at the Town Hall was being

upgraded to 200 amps and that it would then be possible to install an air conditioner upstairs.

Mr. Baer reported that the Town of Austerlitz has approached him about buying a used car from the County for use by the Building and Zoning Departments in both Towns. After some discussion by the Board, Mr. Baer said that he would do some analysis of mileage expenses vs. the cost of the vehicle.

- e) COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Ms. Baldwin reported that the Town web site continues to receive about 900 hits per month and that a questionnaire had been added to the site asking what features people would like to have included. There had been one response to date, asking about putting the Assessor's database on-line. Mr. Baer suggested that Ms. Baldwin ask Austerlitz how this had been done on their site and added that the County is studying the benefits of county-wide assessing. Ms. Baldwin raised the point that, by consolidating these services, Towns are losing local control. Mr. Baer responded that while this was indeed an issue, it might be offset by increased efficiencies in managing the data. He added that to make such a change, both Hudson and then the County would have to pass referendums.

Ms. Baldwin reported that the quarterly newsletter had been printed and was available in the Town Hall. She also stated that there is a need for a Town-wide calendar that can be dove-tailed with the calendars of neighboring towns. Ann will explore this possibility.

IV. Other Business

- f) ANIMAL CONTROL: Ms. Baldwin reported that she and Mr. Baer had interviewed three applicants for the position of Animal Control Officer, and that she was recommending that the Board offer the position to the applicant with the most experience and the best understanding of all facets of the job, Dan Reed of Copake. On a motion by Ms. Baldwin, seconded by Mr. Cipkowski,

Adopted by a vote of a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays,

It was resolved to accept Dan Reed's application for the position of Animal Control Officer, his employment to begin July 21, 2008, and his compensation to be as specified for that position in the 2008 Town Budget.

- g) ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – Mr. Baer stated that Casey Kuhn's term on the ZBA had expired and that the ZBA Chairman, Craig Norton, had asked that Mr. Kuhn be reappointed. There being no other applicants and Mr. Kuhn being willing to serve, on a motion by Mr. Barbato, seconded by Mr. Sena,

Adopted by a vote of a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays,

It was resolved to reappoint Casey Kuhn to another term as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

- h) CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL: Mr. Baer told the Board that the Public Hearing regarding the re-establishment of the CAC had not been

scheduled so that no action on that issue could be taken. A hearing will be scheduled in time for the August Board meeting. In the meantime, all prior CAC members have been asked to submit a letter to the Board asking to be reappointed. It is anticipated that there will be one vacancy to be filled.

- i) MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE: On a motion by Ms. Baldwin, seconded by Mr. Barbato,

Adopted by a vote of 5 aye and 0 nays

It was resolved to increase the Town's mileage reimbursement rate from the current 40.5¢ per mile to the County's rate of 58.5¢ per mile.

- j) TOWN HALL SECURITY: Mr. Baer expressed concern that the new alarm is not always being set when the last person exits Town Hall. Cameras are being installed to determine how the alarm system is being used.
- k) TOWN BUDGET: Mr. Baer reported that the expenditures from the General Fund are "on track," and that the increased sales tax payments from the County and the recently deposited building fees have helped.

Regarding the Highway Fund, the General Repair line – which includes gasoline and diesel fuel – is way ahead of budget, and Snow Removal is already at ±96% of budget. It is projected that fuel will be \$25,000 over budget by year-end. Mr. Baer expressed the hope that funds will be available to transfer from the General Fund to cover these expenses so that the Town will not have to dip into its reserves.

- l) UPCOMING HEATING SEASON: Mr. Baer reported that the County is working on a plan to assist its most vulnerable citizens with the anticipated high heating costs in the 2008-2009 winter season. The Town has a list of these residents in its Emergency Management Plan and will be addressing their needs over the next few months.
- m) EMINENT DOMAIN CASE: Mr. Baer reported that the court case regarding the Edelman land has been settled and that the Edelmanns' appeal for additional legal and appraisal fees has been denied. The case is closed.
- n) PAY BILLS: On a motion by Mr. Cipkowski, seconded by Mr. Sena,

Adopted by a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays

It was resolved to pay the Town's bills in the following amounts:

General Fund	\$ 30,921.99
Highway Fund	\$ 207,448.55
Capital Fund	\$ 189,597.26

V. Adjournment

On a motion of **Mr. Cipkowski**, seconded by **Ms. Baldwin**,

Adopted by a vote of a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays:

Supervisor Baer adjourned the meeting at **9:30 pm**.

Minutes submitted by: Julie Kane, Hillsdale Town Clerk