

Danby Town Board Minutes of Meeting September 20, 2010

Present:

Supervisor: Ric Dietrich
Councilpersons: Leslie Connors, Kathy Halton, Dan Klein, Dylan Race

Others Present:

Town Clerk Pamela Goddard
Bookkeeper Laura Shawley
Highway Sup't Carl Seamon

Members of the Public:

Ronda Roaring, Joel Gagnon, Ted Crane, Paul Moore, Garry Huddle, Jane McGonegal, Carl Crispell, Tony Rosenbaum, Mike Manfredo, Roy Casterline, Mark Whitmore, some others who did not sign in.

This meeting was held at the West Danby Fire Hall. The meeting was opened at 6:35pm for a Public Information Session

Highway Superintendent Public Information Session:

Members of the public expressed opinions about the upcoming referendum on changing the Highway Superintendent from an Elected to an Appointed position.

- Mel Westmiller stated that he thought Highway Superintendent should be an elected position, as is the case with most other adjacent towns.
- Paul Moore spoke in favor of the change to appointed position. Moore stated that this question came up in the 1950s, and it was considered a positive change at that time.
- Carl Crispell spoke in favor of an appointed Highway Superintendent, based on his prior experience as Supervisor of the Town of Truxton.
- Tony Rosenbaum supports Highway Superintendent training and spoke in favor of appointed Highway Superintendent. She stated that most people who manage Highway Departments and County and City levels are appointed.

There was a extensive session of Q&A between the public and members of the Town Board. Issues included the politics of running for office, whether an appointed could/should be a Danby resident, whether an appointed person would cost more, the Civil Service system for approval/removal, and questions about training for this position. It was noted that, if the local law is approved by voters, the appointed position will be for two year periods, and will not take effect until 2012—at the end of Carl Seamon’s current term.

Guest Presenter

Mark Whitmore, forest entomologist in Cornell’s Dep’t of Natural Resources, made a presentation about the Emerald Ash Borer and the threat it presents to forests and roadways. He passed out several handouts, which are now available at the Town Hall for public information. This asian beetle was first found in Detroit, circa 2002. The larva feed on fluids underneath the bark and girdles the trees. All 16 species of ash in North America are vulnerable. There is no resistance and there are no predators for the beetle in North America. Pesticide application is limited, expensive, and not very effective. There will be no survivors.

This summer, the Emerald Ash Borer was found near Bath in Monroe County (south of Rochester) and in Ulster County. It’s already killing trees quickly in Monroe and Ulster counties. Whitmore spoke about community preparedness. Ash will be gone as a timber species. Money will be spent on urban trees, particularly street trees. Whitmore is encouraging municipalities to make an inventory of trees so they know what they will be liable for. Whitmore described this as a potential health hazard, as dead trees fall. The question was raised about what to do with trees which are not in the Town right of way. Whitmore suggests that, with community planning, we can slow

it down and save money. Transporting wood spreads the range of the beetle. Chipping an infected tree is better than keeping the ash for fire wood. Whitmore suggested inter-municipal cooperation for chipping machines, etc.

Privilege of the Floor:

There was additional commentary on the Highway Superintendent Referendum. Mike Manfredo spoke in favor of the Highway Superintendent being an elected position. Roy Casterline urged that any appointed Highway Superintendent be selected from Danby residents.

Frank Proto, County Legislature Report:

Frank Proto gave a report on recent activities of the County Legislature. His report focused on the Cell Tower legislation study, an energy strategy amendment to the comprehensive plan (Proto voted against as potentially too expensive), and concerns about the County tourism budget. Funding from the room tax money will be used to hire a tourism planner. There are questions about the qualifications of the preferred candidate.

Proto urged the Town to put in requests for Celebrations money through Jackie Kipola. He also gave an update in the County Health Care Consortium and the County budget process. At least 20 positions are marked to be cut. Cuts to the Youth Programs, visiting nurse services, and at the assessment office are of particular concern. When asked his opinion about these cuts, Proto stated that he considers these cuts a bad idea, particularly at Youth Services and at the Health Department. He expressed a need for long term planning in order to restore funding.

Danby Town Budget:

The Preliminary Budget was distributed. Clerk Goddard certifies that the preliminary budget was received on September 20, 2010. There can still be changes to this budget.

The next budget workshop meeting will be held in the Danby Town Hall on Monday, September 27 at 7pm. Bookkeeper Shawley will explain the preliminary budget at that time and explain the current state of the Town's finances. More analysis will be presented to get work going on drafting the 2011 budget.

Cell Tower Initiative:

There was further Q&A about this issue, particularly about the way that money would be spent, what the Towns will receive for this money, and what references there are for the consultants. Supervisor Dietrich explained some of the background and added information that cell tower permits may need to be updated in relation to pressure from the cell communication companies. The TCCOG members believe that intermunicipal agreements would be of benefit and that a legal opinion is needed as to what Towns can legally do to regulate cell tower construction. This may be time sensitive in that funding is available at this time.

It was suggested that questions from the Town Board be sent to Herb Engman via Email. The board agreed to do this and act on this resolution in October. Dan Klein will email the questions and distribute the Q&A to the board.

Planning Board Attendance:

There was a discussion of the problem of PB members who chronically miss meetings, including the appointed Chair who has missed many meetings. Klein reported that although Selin has missed several meetings, he intends to be appropriately active starting in November. Goddard, as PB secretary, expressed concern about other PB members who miss meetings and the fact that no alternates have been appointed. Klein suggested a "wait and see" strategy, and also volunteered to begin recruitment for upcoming vacancies. There was further discussion about whether there should be a change in the appointment of chair. Dietrich offered to write a letter to PB members who are negligent in their attendance and to have a discussion with Selin and Roe about the question of who should be chair.

There was a short discussion of whether the PB tasking charge should be redefined in relation to the comprehensive plan and industrial development. Connors urged the Board to not change direction for the PB at this time. Throwing a different focus at that Board might be counter-productive and premature. The TB decided to wait and not make a change at this time.

Delta Road Laws/Road Survey:

Shawley gave a short report on the Delta road survey. The Town has been charged a small amount for the first phase of categorizing our roads. A meeting will be set up soon between the Highway Superintendent and representatives from Delta.

NYSERDA Grants:

Dietrich gave an update. New payment system was negotiated. A draw-down basis will allow gradual payments for sections of the project, which means that there will be no need for a BAN. The Town is looking into changing the biomass boiler proposal from a wood chip burner to one which burns hay bales. Dietrich characterized this change as a better fit for Danby and more efficient.

Town Hall Repairs:

There was a discussion of the need for additional work on the Town Hall. There have been some cost overruns due to the nature of the repairs which needed to be made, particularly to the cupola and tower. Dietrich advised the Board that all of the flashing is shot and needs to be replaced. An internal structural report will also be created with an assessment of the physical structure, including problems with the foundation. Shawley advised the Board that money for these repairs is available in the building reserve fund. The building will look the same when it is done.

Resolution No. 112 of 2010 – TOWN HALL PAINTING PROJECT – CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL WORK

RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Danby approves additional work related to painting, washing, and repairs to the Town Hall, in the amount of \$2895, with the source of funds to be a transfer of funds from the Town Building Reserve Fund.

Original contract price \$30,555

Additional Repairs to Cupola and Tower authorized 9/16/10 \$3910

Proposed additional work: \$3985

Power wash north side of old bldg. and 3 sides of addition.

Install new ¼ round moulding on the sides of the three windows on north side of old bldg.

Sand and repaint eave trim on north side and its 3-ft. return on west side, the window trim and vertical corner boards on this north side, with Annapolis Gray to unify color of trim on bldg.

Paint columns and associated fascia and soffit trim at the side entrance to town offices, power sand, spot prime, and paint with Sherwin Williams Duration.

Total	\$7895
Minus previous amt.	
Authorized	<u>\$5000</u>
	\$2895

Moved by Klein, Second by Connors. The motion passed.

In Favor: Connors, Halton, Klein, Race, Dietrich

Energy Conservation Survey:

Dan Klein informed the Board of a door to door service project featuring college students who will be providing information on home energy conservation, to be held in Danby on Saturday, October 30. The project is looking for Danby resident volunteers to help distribute information on energy conservation, retro-fitting homes, and to distribute compact fluorescent light bulbs.

Warrants:

General Fund 2010, vouchers #350-412 for \$49,507.77

Moved by Connors, Second by Klein. The motion passed.

In Favor: Connors, Halton, Klein, Race, Dietrich

Highway Fund 2010, voucher #99-124 for \$121,996.82

Moved by Halton, Second by Dietrich. The motion passed.

In Favor: Connors, Halton, Klein, Race, Dietrich

Water District Fund 2010, vouchers #46-51 for \$680.42

Moved by Halton, Second by Dietrich. The motion passed.

In Favor: Connors, Halton, Klein, Race, Dietrich

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the Meeting was made at 9:03pm.

Pamela S Goddard, Town Clerk