

**TOWN OF HOWARD  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
AUGUST 14, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Howard Board was called to order by Town Supervisor Donald Evia at 7:00pm.

**Present:** Town Supervisor Donald Evia, Councilman Ed Frey, Councilman Ed OBrochta, Councilman Ron Dyer, Councilman Gary Rice, and Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer.

**Also Present:** Barry Kidder (P.B.), Theresa Dyer, Richard Stewart.

The Pledge to the flag was led by Town Supervisor Don Evia.

**Previous Minutes:** The minutes for the previous meeting were reviewed by the Board.

**A Motion** was made by Councilman Dyer and seconded by Councilman Rice to approve the July 10, 2024 minutes.

**Carried:** Councilman Frey, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye, Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

**Public Comment:** Richard Stewart pointed out that there was an error in the minutes. He said that it was the Annual Financial Report that he was asking about, not the Supervisors Report in the July minutes. He continued asking how the Annual Financial Report was coming along. Supervisor Evia explained that it should be finished up soon and that Rick Blafield has been working with the Bookkeeper, Christine Haar to accomplish this. Supervisor Evia explained that Mr. Blafield is verifying everything from last January 2023 to date to give Christine a starting point that is correct. like an audit. He also explained that Mr. Blafield gave recommendations on how to do some things differently and that everything will be tied to Williamson Law making it easier going forward. Christine Haar also addressed the Board with a typed letter explaining about the process and extending her apologies to the Board for this taking so long and why that was. She also made copies of the budget balances as of August 1, 2024 for the Board members. Mr. Stewart also questioned a FEMA report dated back in 2021 for damages in the Town of Howard, he claims that there was a management charge of \$31,700.00. Superintendent Lee Pyer said that is an error, it was \$3,105.00. Richard said that it should be corrected on the FEMA website.

**Department Reports:**

**A. Monthly Highway Report-** Superintendent Pyer reports that the department has been working on grading roads, mowing roadsides, filling pot holes. Hauling gravel on Feenaughty Rd, Hammer Creek Rd. and Bennett Rd... McBeth Rd. pipe is in and done. He said that West Buena Vista Rd. (seasonal road) is closed due to the heavy rain storm and washout, he said it will not be opened back up until it can be fixed and that there are other roads that have washouts that will take priority. He said the storm did a lot of damage to the roads. He said he has opened a claim up with FEMA and that he has 30 days to get them an estimate and he estimates around \$250,000 in damages if not more. He also said that for all NYS there is a threshold of

37 million that must be met before FEMA will kick in. Councilman Frey questioned if seasonal residents would have access to their properties on W. Buena Vista Rd. Lee responded that the "Road Closed" signs are up and they enter at their own risk. The Board and Superintendent Pyer discuss options on putting in bigger pipes and deepening ditches to prepare for the future. He also commented that the CHIP paperwork has been handed in for payment of \$525,165.82 in September.

**B. Monthly Planning Board Report-** Barry Kidder reports that they are starting to get some surveys regarding the town park. He reports that on September 19, 2024 @ 6:00pm at the Fire Department they are having a community meeting to discuss the town park and get input from the town residents. Councilman Rice asked if that was going to be in place of their September Planning Board meeting and Barry responded "Yes." Barry also stated that they were going to be putting this in the "Shopper." Supervisor Evia asked if anyone on the Board has questions for Barry. Councilman OBrochta explained that this is a multi-year plan, followed up with grant money and wants to make sure that the people understand this fact, this will minimize the taxpayer impacted. Councilman OBrochta also suggests steps that should be taken in the process of prioritizing that work in the park. He is getting estimates from Bullfrog Construction regarding what can be done with the pavilion. Barry explains that the meeting is geared towards finding out what the town people want in the park. Councilman OBrochta comments that he will be contacting the Grant Writer by the next meeting. Councilman Dyer asked about an outline on the grant that would be eligible. Councilman OBrochta responded that anything would be except playground equipment and that would be through a different grant called "Gametime" and that grant offers 100% match. Supervisor Evia asked if the Planning Board had been talking to Grant Writers. Barry responded that they had gotten some information regarding grants on playgrounds. The Board expresses the importance of not causing conflicts with each other and working together. Councilman Frey reminds Barry that the Planning Board members are appointed by the Town Board and that they are supposed to keep the Town Board informed of their actions before moving on them and following the chain of command. Councilman Frey asked about the park surveys and Barry responded that they were put on the website to be filled out there. The Town Clerk, Fran Sharp responded that was not able to be done that way, instead they were made printable and filled out to be mailed to the office. Councilman OBrochta reiterated why he had gotten ahold of Hunt Engineering (Grant Writer) was to establish a base and when they do their part and they bring it back to the Board and the Board would then send it on to the Planning Board and that is the process. He also commented that he believes a community meeting is beneficial and he believes he will attend this community meeting to answer any questions the public may have. The Board advises that at the community meeting things should be kept generic. Barry commented that the park survey did not turn out like they had anticipated that it would.

**C. Monthly Fire Department Report-** No report

- D. Monthly Assessor's Report-** No report
- E. Monthly Building Inspector's Report-** No report
- F. Monthly Town Justice Report-** Written report consisting of cases and fines for the month of July. Justice Cornell wrote a check to the town in the amount of \$345.00 for July 2024.
- G. Monthly Animal Control Report-** Written report/Nothing to report for July 2024
- H. Monthly Library Report-** Written report consisting of a letter addressed to the Town Board members, Expense Sheet, Miscellaneous attendance sheet. In the letter, they give a thank you to the Town Board for the diligent work of getting the potholes in the driveway filled. They mention they have received several positive comments about them being filled in.  
Councilman OBrochta reports that he met with Bullfrog Construction to discuss the repairs to the library. He reports there is roof damage, missing shingles, drip edge and there is a sag. Also, will be putting in a ridge cap on the roof, re-doing the front porch roof and replacing the front railing (revitalization) and that the owner of Bullfrog Construction will be working up an estimate to present to the Board soon. Councilman OBrochta also comments that Bullfrog's work is very good.  
Richard Stewart claims that the Church next door to the library acknowledged that the town was going to change the driveway between the buildings to sod. He suggested that the section between the sidewalk and the curb (road) should also be sod, which the Board agrees is a good idea.
- I. Monthly Town Clerk's Report-** Written report for July 2024 consisting of revenue brought in from 6 Certified Copies (\$60.00), 1 Dog Redemption (\$20.00) and 18 Dog Licenses (\$215.00).  
Disbursements: Paid out to Town Supervisor (\$295.00) and NYS Animal Population Control Program (\$55.00) totaling \$350.00.  
Town Clerk, Fran Sharp reports that she spoke with Spectrum on the security of our internet service and they reassured us that it is secured. She also spoke with Ed Flaitz, (Ed's Computers), about the security of the office computer's anti-virus. He removed the free version of Avast and bumped the security with the Window's Defender that was in the computer.  
She also mentioned that Robby Patrick stopped by and dropped off a thank you card made up by the children that participated in the summer youth program for the Board Members.

Town Clerk, Fran Sharp also mentioned to the Board that she has noticed the carpets have many stains and is in need of a good cleaning. She offers a quote from “3 Generation Clean” service to clean all carpets and runners as well as baseboards for a fee of \$300.00

**A Motion** was made by Councilman OBrochta and seconded by Councilman Rice to hire “3 Generation Clean” to clean all the carpets in the town hall offices.

**Carried:** Councilman Frey, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Councilman Frey asked if we thought doing hunting licenses again. The Clerk explains with the availability of being able to obtain a hunting license from a personal computer and smart phones, we would not be doing them in the office.

- J. Monthly Town Supervisor’s Report-** Supervisor Evia reports that the town received a Sales Tax check (\$73,942.24), Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer had 3 checks from scrape metal and the Clerk’s check (\$295.00) with a total of \$75,058.99 to be deposited in the bank.

He also talked about the office computer’s Windows program and that by 2025 Windows 10 will no longer be supported. He comments that as budget time approached that Board will need to be looking at upgrading the office PC’s.

**Old Business:** Supervisor Evia reports that he did not talk to the Town’s Attorney regarding the “Squatter’s Law.” He comments that he believes that by reading back over the Clifton Park’s Law and why they could change some of the wording and create our own town law. Councilman Frey comments that they could amend the law down the road if need be and suggests having the Town Attorney look over the changes made to the law. The Board agrees to set a Public Hearing for the next month’s Board meeting, September 11, 2024.

**A Motion** was made by Councilman Frey and seconded by Councilman Dyer to set a Public Hearing on the adoption of a new Local Law regarding Residential Property and Squatters on September 11, 2024 at 7:10pm and for it to be put in the Hornell Evening Tribune and The Shopper.

**Carried:** Councilman Frey, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

**New Business:** The Board talks about reviewing the Town’s Reserve Fund policy and because things change on the purpose and amounts, they decide to further discuss the amounts that need to go on the Reserve Fund Policy at Budget time (November) and make set amounts in December for Budget year 2025.

**Regular Business:** The regular bills were presented to the Board for Audit

Highway Fund	(Abstract #87 – 100)	\$51,315.85
General Fund	(Abstract #402 – 419)	\$11,943.53
Street Lighting	(No Abstract #/Credit)	\$0.00

**A Motion** was made by Councilman Frey and seconded by Councilman Rice to approve and pay these bills.

**Carried:** Councilman Frey, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye, Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

**Executive Session:** None

**Town Board Discussion:** None

**Adjournment:**

**A Motion** was made by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman OBrochta to adjourn the meeting at 8:41pm.

**Carried:** Councilman Frey, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Frances Sharp  
Howard Town Clerk