

**RED HOOK TOWN BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 2009**

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York was convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook.

Present: Councilman James Ross, Deputy Supervisor
Councilwoman Micki Strawinski
Councilman Harry Colgan
Councilman Robert McKeon
Town Clerk Sue McCann
Also Present: Attorney for the Town Christine Chale
Absent: Supervisor Sue Crane

Deputy Supervisor Ross opened the meeting after a five minute break following the Public Hearing at 9:10 pm.

AMENDED SUPERVISORS REPORT FOR THE END OF 2008

Deputy Supervisor Ross explained that the amended Supervisor's report was handed to the Board just prior to the meeting. Business Manager Deborah Marks submitted the report because it had to be amended. A few bills came within the last few days and she requested approval of four budget adjustments to the 2008 budget. The request is for Appropriation of \$2,210.00 in the General A for Engineering General. That was for a bill she just received today for the study of the air quality in the Highway Garage; \$1,800.00 in the Highway DB Fund for the liquid de-icer; \$5.00 Highway DB fund for Hospital & Medical; \$10,000.00 transfer from Red Hook Fire Pension to Firemen's Workers Comp.

On a motion of Deputy Supervisor Ross, seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski, moved to accept the amended budget for the fiscal year 2008.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

Deputy Supervisor Ross explained that Business Manager Deborah Marks requested that he appoint two Town Board members to perform the required annual "audit" of the Supervisor's books. Deb will be available any time for their convenience.

Councilman Colgan and Councilwoman Strawinski will perform the annual audit.

AUTHORIZE SOLAR PANEL METER IN PUBLIC METER IN PUBLIC AREA

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked Councilman Colgan to address this since he was the one who put this on the agenda.

Councilman Colgan asked the CAC to explain this. Their desire is to put a meter somewhere.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked what the cost would be before the Board decides if we should do this.

CAC Chair Brenda Cagle explained there is a wire cost.

Councilman Colgan explained that he has extra wire for use if needed.

CAC Chair Brenda Cagle said it would be free then if a volunteer could install the cable-like wire.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked if this is a monitor of our actual meter.

Brenda responded it is. There is a NYSEERDA grant and the project would be done by Hudson Valley Clean Energy. It is part of a demo project so the public can see real time data. They would do it at no cost. A wire would have to be brought through a panel downstairs.

Denis Collet, who has been working with Hudson Valley Clean Energy, explained that it is just a communication cable. There are no power requirements. It needs a frame to hold it in place and shows the real time information.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked that the Town Supervisor and Town Clerk decide the best location for the display.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan, seconded by Councilman McKeon, moved to authorize the CAC to move forward with the solar panel meter.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

CAC - REQUEST CONTINUATION OF TOWN MEMBERSHIP IN ICLEI

Councilman Colgan explained that the CAC is asking to authorize payment of an annual membership fee.

Denise Barton explained that ICLEI is the organization that will perform a greenhouse gas inventory for the Town. The CAC has been offered the services of a Bard College for Environmental Policy graduate student who has volunteered to spend her summer in Red Hook assembling a greenhouse gas inventory for the Town. The CAC feels that her time will be best spent with the support that the ICLEI membership provides including access to the online reporting format and current case studies. The cost of the membership is \$600.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked if the \$600 is going to come out of the CAC budget.

Councilman McKeon said there is no greater challenge we face even including the economic situation now, than the potential effects of climate change and we need to do a lot more in order to make our local contribution to that effort. He supports the request for the \$600 membership fee.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan, seconded by Councilman McKeon, moved to authorize the continuation of the Town's membership in ICLEI.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

The vote was taken after the following discussion:

Councilwoman Strawinski asked if there is an additional fee for the training or do they get to go to the training with this membership.

Denise Barton explained that sometimes there is a fee; sometimes it is included with the membership.

John Douglas explained that the Recreation Committee is considering placing solar panels on the buildings in the Rec. Park. He suggested that maybe the CAC can work with them regarding the solar panels.

ENERGY STAR

Deputy Supervisor Ross referred to the revisions to the language of the proposed local law.

Attorney Chale explained that the revisions were based on comments from the CAC. Primarily they were definitional, not particularly substantive. The Public Hearing has been set for March 10, 2009.

Attorney Chale reviewed the revisions with the Board. She asked the Board to formally accept this version of the law for purposes of the Public Hearing that is scheduled for March 10, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan, seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski, moved to accept the law as written.

Adopted	Ayes 3	Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 1	Ross
	Absent 1	Crane

The vote was taken after the following discussion:

Deputy Supervisor Ross explained that he is very much in favor of Energy Star building but he is very much opposed to making it part of our building code. He is in favor of educating our Building Inspector and Zoning Enforcement Officer on this and encouraging everyone who comes in for a building permit to build an Energy Star home. He is opposed to making it a requirement at this time.

Councilman McKeon disagrees with Deputy Supervisor Ross on the issue. We can't afford to get it wrong and we have to do everything we can on the local level to make a difference and lessen our impact. He recognizes it is an imposition, but is comforted by the fact that the builder who gave the Energy Star presentation said it is very easy, very flexible and not too much of an intrusion. It also will actually make it cost effective for the homeowner.

REORGANIZATION

CAC – The committee sent a letter to the Board asking that they appoint Dennis Collet to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mary Ann Johnson.

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to appoint Denis Collet to fill the vacancy on the CAC term to expire December 31, 2009.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to reappoint Susan Ellis, Jane Ferguson, Ann Rubin and Zoie Riel terms to expire December 31, 2010.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to reappoint Brenda Cagle as Chair of the CAC term to expire December 31, 2009.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nay 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

The Board discussed whether or not to create a position for an extra member possibly as an advisor.

Attorney Chale explained that the committee has a certain number of members but someone who is available can certainly attend the meetings and be helpful.

Greenway & Trails Committee – Councilwoman Strawinski explained that the committee had two letters of interest. They considered taking them as opposed to keeping Robert George or Ralph Choinsky, neither of whom have a good attendance record to warrant their staying on the Committee.

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to appoint Susan Gilnack and Marina Michahelles terms to expire December 31, 2009 and reappoint Henry Christopher, John Kuhn, and Doug Strawinski terms to expire December 31, 2010.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to appoint Howie Callies as Chair of the Greenway & Trails Committee term to expire December 31, 2009

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

Ag & Open Space Committee – Councilman McKeon told the Board that the committee still hasn't come up with a recommendation for the vacancy.

On a motion of Councilman McKeon, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to reappoint Pete Hubbell, Beth Mead and Mary Ann Johnson terms to expire December 31, 2010.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

On a motion of Councilman McKeon, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to appoint Larry Thetford and MaryAnn Johnson as Co-Chairs of the Ag. & Open Space Committee terms to expire December 31, 2009.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

Disaster Preparedness Committee – Councilwoman Strawinski is working on the committee. She spoke to Chuck Simmons who is willing to serve as the Bard liaison, but she hasn't been able to call the rest of the members.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Deputy Supervisor Ross noted that two members of the ZBA were in attendance at the meeting and are interested in serving again. One is the Chairman. He wanted discussion regarding the ZBA appointments.

Councilwoman Strawinski has one constituent who is going to send an updated letter of interest and she'd like to receive that before moving forward.

Deputy Supervisor Ross said we have standing committee members who have served for some time and have done an excellent job. He's never seen a problem. We also have an alternate and we generally fill a vacancy with an alternate. It makes sense to move on these positions this evening.

Councilwoman Strawinski said some of the committees deserve Supervisor Crane's weighing in. The Supervisor should be here when doing Board appointments as opposed to committee appointments.

Councilman McKeon wants to take a look at the structure of the Planning Board and the ZBA. The alternates are not attending that often so he'd like to revisit if the Board is comfortable with alternates.

Deputy Supervisor Ross said the Supervisor was ready to work on appointments when she was here last. He and Supervisor Crane felt that was prudent to do at that time. Then, you said you weren't ready to do that, yet you brought up these other committees and were ready and willing to move on those. He feels it is important to move forward on this committee as well.

Councilwoman Strawinski appreciates what he is saying but there is a big difference between committees that we have oversight of and Boards that we don't.

Deputy Supervisor Ross doesn't understand and asked if she had a problem with any one of these members that have served for some time.

Councilwoman Strawinski stated that she heard some concerns from constituents about conflicts of interest and she is still weighing that in her own mind.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked what those conflicts were and who the concerned citizens are that expressed them.

Councilwoman Strawinski will ask them to come to the next meeting. She's told them they should come and speak on their own behalf.

Deputy Supervisor Ross stated those constituents should be here if that's the way they feel. He asked Councilmen Colgan and McKeon how they felt as far as the Zoning Board appointments.

Councilman Colgan thinks we need to clear the air on the issue.

Councilman McKeon said some of the alternates, especially the Planning Board, felt that the fact they attended but did not get to vote caused them to lose interest so there was an attendance issue. We had a situation with the Planning Board when even with the two alternates there still wasn't a quorum. He would want to take a look at those types of issues. It is incumbent upon us to make sure there is a quorum in order to conduct business. He wants to have this conversation when Supervisor Crane gets back about alternates and whether or not they can vote and whether or not we really even want to have them.

Deputy Supervisor Ross explained that we appointed alternates in case there was a problem with a quorum. As a matter of policy we said we would encourage the alternates to attend all meetings but they should not automatically vote unless they are needed to fulfill the quorum. If you'd like to revisit exactly how to use the alternates, he has no problem with that. He doesn't see how that has any influence on the Board picking the members for the committee itself.

Councilman McKeon said it does matter for him. He wasn't quite ready to do all this; it is a big puzzle for him.

Councilwoman Strawinski went on record to say that Chairman (Tim) Ross has done a good job there. It is just a big concern when we hear there is a potential conflict because you are an engineer who brings projects before the Planning Board from time to time. She invited him, when she brings those people to come and speak, to be able to speak to that issue personally.

Deputy Supervisor Ross said that has never happened. What he has done is design, for free, our new proposed Recreation Park two or three different ways in order to give it to engineers who bid on that project and probably make it a lot more reasonable a cost to us. He never got a dime for that.

ZBA Chair Tim Ross first addressed the issue of the alternates. Craig Christensen has been very good but his work schedule sometimes precludes him from attending some meetings. The last three or four meetings Trilby Sieverding attended classes. She sits on the Board and contributes to the conversation, but in accordance with the Town Board's wishes, does not vote unless they need a quorum. Fortunately, in the last few meetings they had a quorum. His understanding is that John Douglas' term and his term expire this year and that is not the way it is supposed to be by Town law. We are supposed to be on a seven year stagger. With these reappointments the timing should be looked at and the three vacancies should be correctly staggered to make it back to the seven year trend. Regarding him personally being an engineer in the Town, he does have a conflict occasionally. The record bears out that when an applicant is before the ZBA he recuses himself. He did deal with the recreation park and did layouts because the initial layout, in his opinion based on the current recreation park, from an engineering standpoint was incorrect. Baseball fields have specific engineering requirements. He did all that pro bono. He is not certain if that is what Councilwoman Strawinski is referring to but he doesn't know how that is a conflict. He already volunteers his time, so he volunteered a little more. He stated that he certainly would like to work with her husband Doug Strawinski and go forward with other issues with the recreation park. He isn't sure what the conflict of interest is.

Councilwoman Strawinski responded it is with regard to his own engineering business.

Tim Ross told her that he has one very stagnant item in front of the Planning Board. Most of his work at this point is in Columbia County as she knows there is not a lot going on right now. So that being said he is not sure why the Board is waiting. Finishing the reorganization is more important than chasing issues that are not a problem.

REQUEST PANDA USE “GREEN MINUTE” SPOTS AS LEAD INTO MEETING COVERAGE

Councilman Colgan states this request came from the CAC. They wanted to put some “green” video clips before Town Board meetings on PANDA.

Councilwoman Strawinski explained it would serve as a public service announcement. It would be a good opportunity to have them seen.

Deputy Supervisor Ross asked if it would be done before the meetings.

Councilman Colgan suggested the CAC could do the tapes and hand them over to PANDA. We really don’t have to be involved at all.

Fred Cartier suggested they talk to Dan, the Program Manager at PANDA.

APPROVE MAILING OF AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DISTRICT AND TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT ZONING SECTIONS TO AFFECTED LANDOWNERS

Deputy Supervisor Ross thought that we already voted to do that. He asked Councilman McKeon if he proposes to do the whole thing now or just a one page notice that explains that we are moving along on this and it can be viewed on the website or that residents can come in and get a copy, rather than mailing a whole package.

Councilman McKeon explained the possibility of just mailing to Ag Business District landowners just a small section that would apply to them so that they can have it in hand and be prepared if they want to join the public process on March 10th. We would do the same for the proposed Traditional Neighborhood. The point is that they are likely to have a significant change in zoning so he thinks it is important to put it in their hands. The expense can’t be more than a couple of dollars for the landowners involved.

Deputy Supervisor Ross explained that if you look at the whole thing between the Traditional Neighborhood and the Agricultural Business District it is most of the Town. He is concerned about how much this is going to cost.

Councilman McKeon said there are about one hundred or so in the Ag Business District and the Traditional Neighborhood District have a smaller number of unique landowners.

Deputy Supervisor Ross reminded him all the neighbors of these properties should also be notified. Whenever you make a change in zoning or planning you have to notify the neighbors as well.

Councilman McKeon is not suggesting that we do this in lieu of our legal requirements to notify; he thinks it is a matter of courtesy and a matter of soliciting public input. He said he can get it done as he’s mailed to these folks many times in the past.

Town Clerk Sue McCann asked for a list of that district. She would like the names and full parcel numbers. It is not on the document.

Councilman McKeon does not have a list of the Traditional Neighborhood District landowners. We are now at the point that we want the public’s opinion on this. The mailing is roughly \$250, that’s a guess.

Deputy Supervisor Ross thinks we should do this because it is miniscule compared to what we spent on this zoning proposal, and the people it affects most obviously should know.

On a motion of Deputy Supervisor Ross, seconded by Councilman Colgan, moved to approve the mailing of the Agriculture Business District and Traditional Neighborhood District zoning sections to affected landowners.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Deputy Supervisor Ross opened the meeting for public comments.

Linda Keeling noticed that Central Hudson put their property up for sale for \$875,000.00 and she wondered if the Town Board would be doing anything with the property. She suggested a winter trail and possibly cultivating the property. She is concerned that houses might be put up there and it would disrupt the farming presently going on.

Deputy Supervisor Ross thinks it would be a good thing for Ag & Open Space to take a look at.

Councilman McKeon thinks they weighed in on that several years ago. They felt that was critical to protect against inappropriate development. He thinks if we work together with adjoining landowners we could have a win/win for everyone. In the past, Scenic Hudson offered financial assistance to accomplish that. We should explore that.

Councilman McKeon thanked the fire company for the pancake breakfast. It was a wonderful event. He thanked them for the job they did at the two alarm fire at a friend's home. He also announced that this morning, at the FDR Library, he and Councilman Colgan attended the unveiling of a program called "Dutchess County Bounty" which is an effort to join local growers with restaurateurs.

Councilwoman Strawinski announced that the Red Hook High School PTSA will hold its annual book fair March 13 through March 15, 2009. It will be held at the Barnes & Noble in Kingston. The Red Hook Vocal Jazz group will perform on Friday, March 13. The HS/MS dramatists will perform excerpts from their upcoming play Peter Pan on Sunday, March 15 at 1:00 p.m.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan, seconded by Deputy Supervisor Ross, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, McKeon
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McCann, Town Clerk