

October 09, 2012

MINUTES OF THE FISCAL AND REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF THURMAN HELD OCTOBER 09, 2012 AT THE TOWN HALL, 311 ATHOL ROAD, ATHOL NEW YORK, COMMENCING AT 6:30 P.M...

PRESENT: MRS. EVELYN WOOD, SUPERVISOR
MR. CHARLES BILLS, COUNCILMAN
MR. LEON GALUSHA, COUNCILMAN
MR. AL VASAK, COUNCILMAN
MR. ROBERT HITCHCOCK JR., COUNCILMAN

Recording secretary: **Cynthia R. Hyde**, Town Clerk

FISCAL MEETING: The Town Board reviewed all claims.

BOARD MEETING: The regular town board meeting was called to order by **Evelyn Wood, Supervisor**.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: On a motion by **Councilman Bills**, seconded by **Councilman Galusha**, the September 11, 2012 regular meeting minutes were approved.

MOTION CARRIED: **5 AYES ~ WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK**

CLAIMS: On a motion by **Councilman Vasak**, seconded by **Councilman Galusha**, payment of vouchers #2012-635 thru 2012-668 for a grand total of \$22,483.85 was approved.

MOTION CARRIED: **5 AYES ~ WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK**

LETTERS:

Letters were received from Evelyn Russell, The John Thurman Historical Society

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and Thurman Emergency Medical Services INC., all letters will be attached to the 10/09/2012 minutes.

REPORTS:

Reports were given by the following officials:

Councilman Vasak ~ Highway- land fill - food pantry

Councilman Galusha ~ EMS

Supervisor Wood ~ Supervisor's report

There was discussion regarding the food pantry. The town board decided to set certain hours for access to the food pantry. The food pantry will now be open on Tuesdays from 9am to 11 am except for the first week of every month. The food pantry will be open from 1:00pm to 2:00 pm the first Monday of every month.

NEW BUSINESS:

Insurance - Supervisor Wood asked the town board to consider whether or not to continue to offer the dental plan as only 2 people use it. **Wood** also suggested a possible vision plan. More research will be done before a decision is made

Workers compensation – Posters have been put up reflecting some changes in workers' compensation. **Supervisor Wood** said that it is necessary to have a workers' compensation policy in place.

Sign - Councilman Galusha said that there was a sign (that was purchase for the town hall and never used) being stored somewhere. **Galusha** asked if the Thurman EMS could use it.

OLD BUSINESS:

Budget – A budget workshop was set for Tuesday October 23, 2012 at 6:00 pm.

Bicentennial – A boulder needs to be located to put the Thurman bicentennial plaque on.

Reenactment – A reenactment group is interested in staging a reenactment in Thurman.

RESOLUTION # 44:

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE TRAINING

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board authorizes the following training:

- *Attendance by Lester Losaw at the November 8-9, 2012 Government Finance Institute's Government Accounting and Financial Reporting Training in Albany, NY.*
- *Attendance by Evelyn Wood at the Association of Towns' 2012 Personnel & Ethics School in East Syracuse, NY on November 2, 2012.*

On a motion by **Councilman Vasak**, seconded by **Councilman Hitchcock**, **resolution # 44** was approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 AYES ~ WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK

RESOLUTION #45:

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH POLICY

WHEREAS the Town of Thurman has been made aware of the need to have a policy regarding the reporting of injuries.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Thurman hereby establishes the attached policy regarding injury reporting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Board directs that all Highway employees receive training to fulfill required by the Occupational Safety, Department of Health and Safety, and Department of Transportation.

On a motion by **Councilman Hitchcock** , seconded by **Councilman Bills**, **resolution # 45** was approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 AYES ~ WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK

RESOLUTION #46:

Resolution to Allow Court to Apply for Grant

BE IT RESOLVED that the Thurman Town Board allows the Town Court to apply for an Office of Court Administration Grant for equipment and supplies.

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On a motion by **Councilman Galusha**, seconded by **Councilman Vasak**, resolution # 46 was approved.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 AYES ~ WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK

A RESOLUTION GRANTING OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDS:

Resolution Granting Occupancy Tax Funds

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board grants three hundred dollars in Occupancy Tax Funds for the Christmas Bazaar scheduled for November 24, 2012.

This resolution was tabled.

LANDFILL:

Last month there had been a discussion regarding senior C+D discounts. It was found (in the minutes) that this had been done in the past. **Supervisor Wood** said that the town board needed to decide if the discount should continue.

Councilman Vasak said that in an effort to be consistent the workers at the landfill want to know what to charge for one item such as a vacuum cleaner or a plastic pool.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Barbara Farrell requested that the letter from the Thurman Ems be put in the minutes.

Delbert Chambers suggested gifting unspent occupancy funds to the invasive species problem in Lake George.

Mr. Chambers also said that he was not supportive of attracting tourism and development to the Town of Thurman. **Chambers** added that his pleasure was the quiet country atmosphere found in Thurman.

Mary Eddy asked the price of the training voted on earlier in the meeting.

Lil Cameron wanted to know if it would be possible to put up the soldier plaque.

Mark Kenyon, Thurman Cemetery Superintendent, reported on the excellent job **Ernie Smith** did on the cemetery maintenance this season. **Kenyon** said he felt

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there should be a separate budget for the cemetery maintenance. **Mr. Kenyon** said that the cemetery committee was hoping to put cemetery maps online and was looking towards making some recommendations to the town board. **Marc Kenyon** said the committee was hoping for a budget that was at least as much as last year.

Delbert Chambers asked if there had been any developments with snowmobile trails. **Supervisor Wood** said they had not heard of any.

ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by **Councilman Galusha**, seconded by **Councilman Hitchcock** the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 AYES ~ **WOOD, HITCHCOCK, GALUSHA, BILLS, VASAK**

Respectfully Submitted:

Cynthia R. Hyde
Town clerk

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THURMAN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES INC.

P.O. BOX 114

572 HIGH STREET

ATHOL, N.Y. 12810

PRESIDENT JEAN F. COULARD

VICE PRES. SCOTT MOSHER

CAPTAIN JOHN O'NEILL

518-623-9014

Oct. 9, 2012

Evelyn Wood, Supervisor

Thurman Town Hall

311 Athol Road

Athol, N.Y. 12810

Dear Ms. Wood,

As you may or may not know by now, Mr. Adam Styers has been removed from the position of Captain of the EMS Squad. Mr. John O'Neill has been moved up to serve as Captain. Consequently, since Mr. Styers was a spokesperson for the squad, I have had to appoint our Treasurer, Mrs. Deb Runyon, in Mr. Styers position of spokesperson.

It is my understanding that Mrs. Runyon has emailed your office of this change, and also requested a meeting with you, and Mrs. Lorrie Smith, the second spokesperson for the squad, at 9:00 AM today, (Tues. Oct. 9, 2012). As a follow-up Mrs. Smith had left a message on your office phone to confirm this meeting.

At this point in time I have been informed that neither has heard from your office.

I have hesitated to get involved, as you are aware and I am, that you and I do not communicate well with each other. But I am finding it necessary to get involved, as it appears that the Thurman Town Board has no intentions of having any discussion with the EMS Board.

Ms. Wood, I cannot impress upon you enough the importance we had attached to the previously expected discussions with the Thurman Town Board, regarding intentions and plans for next year. We had hoped for a congenial, informative meeting on Sept. 5, (a date that the Town Board decided on), but of course that did not happen. Since only two members of the Town Board were present, it was impossible to have a meaningful discussion. That was a sincere disappointment for the EMS Squad and I was offended by the lack of interest; and it was compounded by not receiving an apology or sincere explanation.

For the past two years you have proffered unfounded and questionable reasons for seriously cutting our subsidy appropriation. This has put us at a difficult disadvantage in our efforts to supply quality service to the Town residents with emergency care needs. Through untiring efforts, dedication, and perseverance, the squad has been able to give a 99% response rate to those in need, and the quality of

service they deserve. As I am sure you are aware, three of our members are attending classes in Lewis, NY to obtain Intermediate EMT status, which will give us the ability to provide ALS care. We expect to have the ALS certification returned to us by Jan. or Feb. of 2013. Our application last year was accepted; however, the Commission wanted to see our response rate for this year (2012) before completing the re-certification.

Attending the Intermediate EMT class is also a physical as well as a financial burden, not only on the squad, but also on the members for travel expense. I might add that they have class two nights per week, with one hour each way as travel time, and sometimes on Saturday also. Fortunately a grant has covered the tuition, which is \$1100.00 per person.

I believe the Town Board has absolutely no idea of the tremendous costs associated with the operation of an EMS Squad. If you remember early last year, our response rate was barely up to 50% before we started paying our responders. Since paying them, and having 24/7 coverage on the premises, we have been able to reach the 99%. The increase in response has been constant since April of 2011.

There is no such thing as 100% volunteerism today; not in Thurman and no-where else in the County. Perhaps that is why you read of so many other squads engaging in similar problems with their respective Town Boards.

I cannot explain to you, nor will I attempt to, why so many fire departments are still all volunteer. However, I am aware, as I am sure you are, that they also are having serious manpower problems. They due offer, in lieu of salaries, a benefit and retirement program, so I guess that may be the difference. Because the State mandates the Towns' to provide fire protection, they most likely are allotted a more than sufficient amount for subsidy and appropriation.

New York State is getting more involved in EMS training requirements and protocols. As was explained to the two of your Board members on the Sept 5 meeting; next year the State requires that all EMT certified responders must take the National Registry Course. This, of course, is far more demanding and will naturally improve the level of knowledge and ability of responders.

What is it going to take for the Thurman Town Board to realize that we (the squad) are not asking for anything outlandish. Actually our budget was rather low in projected expenses. We have been tightening our belt, and will have to do so next year also. But there are many expenses that have been added due to NYS requirements changing. Some of these were explained also at the Sept 5 meeting, but unfortunately all your members were not there. Also at the beginning of this year, the Thurman Town Board was adequately informed that the \$40,000.00 would not be sufficient to cover our expenses. I believe it was Mrs. Hitchcock who had the foresight to question this, and I explained to her that we would try fundraising for some of the difference, but we would have to re-visit the contract through midyear. However, when midyear came our efforts to re-visit the contract were shunned. A short but fruitless meeting ensued with nothing resolved.

Consequently, Ms. Wood, this all brings us to this point. We are seriously strapped for operating funds for the remainder of this year. I am attempting to refinance the building mortgage, and recoup some of the equity, but the bank wants a Letter of Intent from the Town Board to ensure that we will have sufficient cash flow for the year 2013 to afford the mortgage payment and remain solvent. We need to have a figure; at least of what you are expecting or hoping. If it is not going to be sufficient for operations next year, we most probably will have to close very shortly. I cannot ask the squad members to again make the sacrifices in time away from their families that they have made this year. And I might add that fundraising has never been as low as it was this year.

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And this is not sour grapes or threatening when I say that I know you will not be able to count on the response rate that your residents need from any neighboring squad. We are all strapped for funds. If the Warrensburg Squad comes into the picture again, you best do some research. They also are having volunteer problems, and financial shortages. As you have been informed in the past, their first responsibility is to the Town of Warrensburg. You may receive sincere promises, but what guarantee do you have once the contract is signed and money has been expended. I would suggest that you acquire a scanner if you don't already have one, and you will hear firsthand how many times Warrensburg EMS has had to call for mutual aid from Lake George, Bolton, or North Warren. And now that North Warren has experienced a serious shortage in manpower, they will not be able to help Warrensburg.

It is time for all Towns to sit up and take notice. If you want emergency medical coverage for your constituents, as they themselves are demanding, you had better become more familiar with the expenses incurred by your squads. In order to keep the cost down for your residents, we have to operate way below the necessary charges, and consequently must rely on the Towns' for subsidy monies.

Also, I wish to inform you that we have been holding the funds for the ambulance pay-off, and wish to take care of that immediately. To be sure we are in agreement, please research your contract and let me know the amount. I must take care of this ASAP if we are forced to close.

My sincere apologies for such a long correspondence. But I know of no other way to inform all of you of all the ramifications of our shared problem. Many of my emails to you last year never saw the light of day for others. So I am now sending this to all members.

Please consider the need of your residents, many of whom are low income, elderly, and in poor health.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this. Please get back to me as soon as possible.

Respectfully,



Jean F. Coulard, Pres.

THURMAN EMS INC.

Cc: Leon Galusha

Charles Bills

Robert Hitchcock

Al Vasack

Thurman EMS Board of Directors

8/30 and
9/10/12

Dear Taxpayers
and members of the Tax Board -

2011 + 2012 -- How MANY Times ARE
We, IN THURMAN, paying in OUR TAXES FOR
THE GARBAGE TRUCK, which is STILL BEING USED
BY THE TOWN FOR SOME OF US -- WILL WE CONTINUE
TO PAY OUT OF TAXES FOR THIS?

DID THE NEW BOXES OF ORANGE Garbage
Bags get paid for with TAX MONEY? AND
WAS SOME OF THE TAX \$ put in by TOWNFOLK
WHO DO NOT USE THEM? ARE THE BAGS BEING PAID
FOR TWICE?

WERE MORE WORKERS PUT ON AT THE
LANDFILL, and at the office?

WAS THE NEW SIGN VOTED ON BY TAXPAYERS?
IT BLINDS DRIVERS AT NITE I'M TOLD?

NOW HERE'S MORE, MANY TOWNFOLK HAVE
CHOSEN TO HAVE THEIR GARBAGE + RECYCLABLES PICKED
UP BY THE ACE COMPANY --- ARE WE STILL
HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS BY PAYING OUR TAXES? OR
PORTION TAKEN OUT OF TAXES FOR NON USE OF THE
TRUCK & DO OUR TAXES PAY FOR GASOLINE, TIRES
AND REPAIRS ON THIS OLD TRUCK!

Please put this in the minutes

Eric (SR.) Russell

October 09, 2012

Copy

THE JOHN THURMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 7
ATHOL, NY 12810

September 25, 2012

Evelyn Wood, Supervisor
Town of Thurman
P.O. Box 29
Athol, NY 12810

Dear Evelyn,

At a September 21 meeting, the JTHS executive board discussed the issue of storage of our society's materials, which include files of historical materials and society records, our own publications (including copies for selling and archiving), audio-visual equipment, tapes of oral histories, a few books, a banner, and fewer than ten donated historical items, along with such storage items as our two fireproof, lockable filing cabinets now in the town hall basement, two regular filing cabinets, a metal cabinet with shelves, a bookcase and miscellaneous small item. In light of the town's ongoing issues with the Harris House and safety and liability concerns, we recognize that our long term use of that building for storage is no longer feasible, even though its location is convenient and we have appreciated having access to it.

The society is now actively seeking a new location to house our materials - either temporary borrowed space in Thurman or Warrensburg, or donated property for a more permanent solution. Because our funds are limited, this effort will take time. We respectfully request that the Town of Thurman continue to allow our current use of the Harris House for one year, until October 1, 2013, so we can make suitable arrangements for these files, publications and items, all valuable resources to the residents of this community and to people all over the country with ties to Thurman. We would clearly label all that belongs to us, will continue carrying the million dollar certificate of insurance we currently hold for use of town property, and would ask that we be given a key for easy access to the building.

On behalf of the John Thurman Historical Society, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Joan Harris, President
Martha Terrell, Vice President
Cynthia Needham, Secretary

James Ligon, Treasurer
Thomas DeVol, Chaplain
Rexford Reynolds, Director

Irene Hall, Director
Doris Bunker, Director
Persis Granger, Director

The John Thurman Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3 organization. Donations are tax exempt as allowable by law.

Highway Report 10/9/12
LAND FILL * FOOD PANTRY.

West Stony Creek has been graded and ditched. Still have a few culverts to replace. Also did a lot of brush cutting. Mostly by Codys' camp where we had gotten some complaints.

Wolf Pond Rd. work has been completed.

River Rd. shoulder repair is completed near Glen-Hudson campground.

Pretty much done hauling our sand for the winter.

Our 2000 gallon diesel tank has been reconditioned and is back in service. We will continue to get gasoline from the County.

We are currently working on Frank King Rd. cleaning ditches and graveling.

Patched up potholes on River Rd and various other locations.

LAND FILL - WINTER HOURS
WED - 12-3 SAT - SUN 8-4

Food Pantry
WEEKLY HOURS will be TUES 9-11 EXCEPT Sun
first WEEK of Month - Hours 9:00am - 1:00pm
MRS KEELER will be operating Food Pantry on Tuesday