

RED HOOK TOWN BOARD MEETING

December 27, 2007

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook, at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Councilman James Ross
Councilman Harold Ramsey
Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro
Town Clerk Sue McCann
Absent: Supervisor Marirose Blum Bump
Deputy Supervisor William O'Neill
Resigned: Councilwoman Sue Crane – 12/22/2007

Councilman Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a motion of Councilman Ramsey, seconded by Councilwoman Pullaro, moved to appoint Councilman Ross as temporary chairperson in the absence of Supervisor Blum Bump and Deputy Supervisor William O'Neill.

Adopted	Ayes	3	Ross, Ramsey, Pullaro
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Blum Bump

Councilman Ross discussed the question regarding the legality of this meeting. This was a regularly scheduled meeting discussed at three prior meetings and was voted on by the five member Board. Therefore it is a legal meeting and a legally scheduled meeting can only be cancelled by an act of this Board. It cannot be cancelled unilaterally by the Supervisor of the Town. We obtained legal opinions from the Association of Towns and the Consolidated Laws of the State of New York, therefore we are continuing with this meeting.

BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE REORGANIZATION

Councilman Ramsey said he received from the Disaster Preparedness Committee a recommendation of members that are coming back. Town Clerk also received a copy of the recommendation.

Councilman Ramsey suggested the new Town Board look at the policy of having more than one official newspaper.

Councilman Ramsey also suggested the new Town Board consider having a contract Attorney for the Town. Having the attorney per diem tends to cause us to overuse them at the taxpayers' expense.

Councilwoman Pullaro referred to a memo dated November 22, 2007 from Marina Schmid, Secretary to the Supervisor, asking Committee Chairs, Board Chairs and Department Heads for their recommendations for reappointment and to indicate if anyone will not be returning. She reviewed information from Disaster Preparedness, Ag and Open Space who will have all members remain on the committee. The Conservation Advisory Council has one vacancy. The Ethics Board members will remain, the Farmland Protection Committee will reappoint all members, as will the Water Board and the Zoning Review Committee. She asked that the chairs of the other committees respond so that they can be finalized as early in January as possible.

Councilman Ross explained that committee chairpersons are appointed annually by the Town Board.

APPOINTMENT TO SEAT VACATED BY COUNCILWOMAN SUE CRANE

RESOLUTION 2007 #131

RE: APPOINTMENT OF MR. ROBERT LATIMER TO FILL THE VACANCY ON THE TOWN BOARD CREATED BY THE RESIGNATION OF COUNCILWOMAN SUE CRANE

On a motion of Councilman James Ross, seconded by Councilman Harold Ramsey for discussion, moved to appoint Robert Latimer to fill the vacancy created on the Board by Councilwoman Crane's resignation.

Adopted	Ayes	3	Ross, Ramsey, Pullaro
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Blum Bump

Councilman Ramsey explained that Rob Latimer is a long time resident of Red Hook, he is a very established businessman, served on the ZBA, and the Board of the Mid-Hudson Civic Center. He feels Mr. Latimer is a good choice.

Councilwoman Pullaro feels that Rob brings business experience to the Board. The Town is a business and we have to run it as one.

Councilman Ross agreed and felt that Councilwoman Crane did a lot of research and put a lot of thought into her choice. He has a lot of respect for her opinion and he too feels we couldn't find a finer candidate.

Mr. Robert Latimer thanked the Board for their confidence in him. He asked that for those who don't know him, not to prejudge him.

HIGHWAY GARAGE

Councilman Ramsey asked to be authorized to go back to Morris Associates to have them prepare a new cost estimate of a highway garage. He would like to take that small step forward on a new highway garage.

Councilman Ross clarified that the cost estimate be based on the prior location and also the exact design possibly at a new location by the new road at the recycling center. He would like a possible guesstimate to make the building more "green".

Councilman Ramsey answered that in the past he did look into different types of energy efficiency and he can provide the report to the new Board. He will ask for a new cost estimate for the highway garage, drafting up the new specs and of changing the location of the highway garage. About a year ago the new cost was about \$2.8 million.

RESOLUTION 2007 #132

RE: AUTHORIZING MORRIS ASSOCIATES TO MOVE FORWARD WITH A COST ESTIMATE FOR THE HIGHWAY GARAGE

On a motion of Councilman Harold Ramsey, seconded by Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro, move to authorize Morris Associates, our Town Engineers, to move forward with a cost estimate of redrafting the specs for the highway garage and a cost estimate of moving the garage from the front location to the rear location.

Adopted	Ayes	3	Ross, Ramsey, Pullaro
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Blum Bump

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Tim Ross questioned the appointments of the Zoning Board and the Planning Boards. The appointments should be 7 years, one each year so that there is possibly one new member each year. He would like to sit and correct the appointments so they are staggered.

Kris Munn commented on the process of the new appointment. He is disappointed that the Board didn't take more time for consideration and allow the new Board to make the decision. He felt there was a rush to select someone.

Rosemarie Zengen applauded and commended the people sitting on the Board for handling four years of poor management on the part of the Supervisor. She thanked the sitting Board members.

Ruth Oja asked how the new highway garage will affect the recycling center, Eye Associates and the new Centers and Greenspace Plan.

Councilman Ross answered that the Recycling Center will be taken into account which is a demanding operation. They don't know more at this point.

Councilman Ramsey wants to see it move forward because the Recycling Center has become cumbersome since the new connector road is going in. He would like to see the highway garage and recycling center go hand in hand and have a new highway garage completed.

Chuck Ketchel compared the synchronicities of the assassination of Benazir Bhutto for her work with democracy and what he feels is the assassination of democracy here in Red Hook.

Vince Murray is disappointed that the public comment period happened after the vote to appoint the new Board member. He feels the new member was railroaded into the position.

Councilman Ross answered that he appreciates his concern but he will not get into politics and methods. The Board knows Mr. Latimer well and they are all confident that he will be a good addition to the Board.

Matthew Kublich feels this is pure politics and there is no excuse for what the Board has done.

Frank Orlando commended the Board for their choice. He knows Rob Latimer and is confident he will put forth the effort the Town deserves.

Mr. Martin said there was no reason for the Supervisor Elect to resign when she did. He feels it was a set up instructed by the Board.

Peter Walsh commended the Highway Supervisor and crew for the tremendous job they do plowing.

Richard Wambach said that some have lost perspective on the reason for Councilwoman Sue Crane's resignation. She was legitimately elected in 2005 by an overwhelming vote. It is her obligation to seek a person to fill her position and make a recommendation to the Board based on the fact that there should be some continuity for her position. He thanked the Board for their consideration of her recommendation and he applauded Harold Ramsey and Lisa Pullaro for their fine service.

Richard Gordon lived here for 30 years. He feels the people have had no control over the process of appointment. He feels the process is a joke. He doesn't know the person appointed but he feels the people of the Town have been disenfranchised. We are a democratic community and want to live together. Why the partisan bitterness. He knows Supervisor Crane and respects her as a person. He doesn't want the Board to expect the people to be happy about how the appointment was made.

Fran Donahue has been a resident for over 40 years. He commended the Board for what they've done over the last few years. In addition he thanked them for their efforts having a traffic light installed at the intersection of Route 9G and Kelly Road. Politically he reserves his comments for the next Board. He would like someone to get the Attorney General to do something about the Bard College vote. He believes that a tax exempt organization should not interfere with the politics of a local government.

Sheryl Griffin commented that the Bard students live in and contribute to this community and have the right to have their say.

Harold Fell has two neighbors who live in NJ who pay thousands of dollars in taxes in Red Hook and they can't vote. He doesn't feel it's fair that they can't vote but Bard College students can.

Steve Zacharzuk thanked the Board for their service over the last few years and reminded the new Board that they are here to serve the people. Regarding the highway garage, let's get down to business on it.

John Sheehan asked about the environmental impact from the highway garage. He believes wells are located behind the recycling center.

Councilman Ramsey said some of those studies have been done and he recommends the new board look at that issue. The highway garage has been there for 50 – 60 years and the study showed that the wells have not been impacted.

Alison Hale-Rude agrees with many residents at the meeting regarding the appointment to the Board. She feels this is a ridiculous charade. The new member should have been voted in by the new Board.

Councilman Ross felt, since there was so much talk about politics at the meeting, he had to make a political statement. When you turn 18 you have the privilege to vote in this country. It is a privilege that should be taken responsibly. The unfortunate problem is for political purposes many of the Bard students have been duped into voting and changing the political atmosphere of our Town and for nothing more than a self serving political purpose. He doesn't want to hear about politics and hear that this Board plays politics. He didn't even want to discuss politics out of respect for this Board.

Councilman Ross thanked Councilman Harold Ramsey and Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro for their service and for the time he spent with them. He is looking forward to a smooth year with lots of compromise and consensus.

On a motion of Councilman Ramsey, seconded by Councilwoman Pullaro, move to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Adopted	Ayes	3	Ross, Ramsey, Pullaro
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Blum Bump

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McCann, Town Clerk