

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN  
HELD FEBRUARY 9, 2014 AT THE TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Darlene Z. Dumas  
Councilwoman Gretchen R. Stark  
Councilman Howard Denison  
Councilman Floyd Varney  
Councilwoman Deborah Witherell

**ABSENT:** Paul Winchell, Highway Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jeff Meyer, Town Attorney, Helen Denno, Confidential Secretary to the Supervisor, Barbara Winchell, Town Clerk, Gene Connell, Cindy Varney, Dave Dumas, Mary Davis

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Councilwoman Witherell. Supervisor Dumas stated she is happy to report we don't need to take a moment of silence tonite.

Motion was introduced by Councilwoman Stark, seconded by Councilman Varney to accept the minutes of the Organizational and Regular Town Board Meetings of January 12, 2015. Councilman Denison stated he hadn't listened to the tape recording of the 1/12/15 meeting but he wasn't in agreement with the last paragraph on page 11 regarding the mortgage tax section and would like it clarified. Councilman Denison's recollection is Supervisor Dumas telling him you can't tell me what to do. Supervisor Dumas stated he was more than welcome to listen to her tape or the Town Clerk's tape recording. Supervisor Dumas stated "What I recall is that you Councilman Denison said you wanted a resolution stating that I must vote no with regards to the .25% mortgage tax increase vote at the County and I said you could make all the resolutions you wanted but you couldn't tell me how to vote. Also, you said you wouldn't mind if the increase in the mortgage tax was paid by the seller but you didn't want it to have to be paid by the buyer".

The Town Clerk reminded everyone that the minutes are not verbatim they are just a condensed version. If people have items prepared before the meeting that they would like included in the minutes to please have it prepared for the Town Clerk and she will be happy to include it in the minutes as an addendum or exhibit.

Supervisor Dumas stated she will ask the Town Board Members all in favor but then ask the Town Clerk to do a roll call for future voting.

Motion was carried.

Motion was introduced by Councilwoman Witherell, seconded by Councilwoman Stark to accept the minutes of the Audit Workshop Meeting of January 15, 2015.

Motion was carried. Councilman Denison abstained from voting as he was absent from this meeting.

Motion was introduced by Councilwoman Witherell, seconded by Councilwoman Stark to accept the minutes of the Public Hearing and meeting of February 2, 2015.

Motion was carried.

Motion was introduced by Councilwoman Witherell, seconded by Councilman Varney to pay bills as warranted and audited.

Motion was carried.

Supervisor Dumas stated she had a question and probably should have asked it prior to voting. Her question was directed to Councilman Denison about not signing the bills and he replied he arrived late and there were already the three (3) required signatures. Supervisor Dumas stated she had noticed that last month he only signed four (4) of the fifty (50) some bills. Supervisor Dumas stated that if you are going to vote yes to authorizing the bills you should at least sign them. She told him if he has question to please ask before they get paid.

Supervisor's Report: The Monthly Statement to Supervisor is on the Town's website. A paper copy is available upon request.

Supervisor Dumas received approximately 15 phone calls for the month of January.

Supervisor Dumas reported that she had signed the Fire and Rescue contracts tonite and now the next step would be to have each organization sign them and return them with proof of insurance. Once the contracts have all been signed and the proof of insurance received the checks can be generated and sent to each organization.

Supervisor Dumas stated that the insurance papers for Hadlock Dam, which is a two (2) year policy, needs to be signed and sent back.

Town Clerk's Report was given for January 2015. The Town Clerk mentioned that the annual handicap parking permit due 2/28/15 was completed and returned to NYS DMV 1/26/15 with 76 tags being issued for the year 2014 compared to 63 being issued for the year 2013. The Town Clerk also mentioned that she had scanned and emailed to the Town Board on 2/3/15 a copy of Mr. Schulz's correspondence regarding Common Core State Standards. The Town Clerk also advised that Curt Rehm had resigned from the Fort Ann Board of Ethics so if anyone knew anyone that was interested in being on the Fort Ann Board of Ethics to please advise. We are still looking for a Planning Board member.

Public Hearing: None

Public Comment opened at 7:15 p.m. with Supervisor Dumas reminding those in attendance that public comment pertains to items on the agenda.

With no comments being made public comment was closed at 7:16 p.m.

Supt of Highways Report: None

On motion of Councilwoman Stark, seconded by Councilman Denison Town of Fort Ann supports the Adirondack Smart Growth grant application for Lake George Trails Mater Plan – Phase 2. The project is an important economic development initiative that seeks to make Lake George a destination for hiking for all abilities. The project will have the capacity to drive significant new visitor dollars to the area through resource, recreation, ecological, and heritage-based tourism. Attorney Meyer suggested putting the letter on Town of Fort Ann letterhead. The Town Clerk will put the letter on Town letterhead and mail on behalf of Chairwoman, Gretchen Stark, Recreation and Tourism Committee.

Motion was carried.

Councilwoman Stark stated that the proceeds from the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Ice Fishing Derby will be distributed to the Fort Ann Library, Fort Ann Youth League, Big Brother Big Sisters and Make-A-Wish Foundation. Next month we will be updated on how the money has been spent such as the Fort Ann Youth League purchasing batting cages and soccer goals.

Councilman Denison advised that the cemetery committee is not currently doing anything due to the weather.

Councilwoman Witherell stated she had to make a couple of changes to the Emergency Preparedness Plan specifically to page 8 phase 2 section. Supervisor Dumas stated she just gave Attorney Meyer a copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan tonite. Councilwoman Witherell would like Attorney Meyer to review it and let her know if he sees anything that should be revised.

Enforcement Officer gave his report for the month of January which included a mobile home packet that had been given to Sylvia Winslow, Hawk Rd., Comstock but has since changed her mind. Mark spoke of a spec house being built by Steve Bush. Mark signed a LRCC 2 for Mary Ciriello who had Charles Friedman tear down a camp at Hadlock.

Mark also advised he received correspondence dated 1/14/15 from NYSDEC regarding Harris Trucking mining permit, which is a renewal, on County Route 16. Supervisor Dumas asked Mark to get copies for the town board members. Mark advised we can get clarification from NYSDEC with just a phone call. Councilman Denison asked about the process, specifically wondering if there are people on County Route 16 that would object to this. Supervisor Dumas asked if the

renewal said there was going to be a Public Hearing? Mark stated he receives a lot of notifications from LGA, APA and DEC. There is a notification for every step of the process.

Mark spent time with John Bonanno, Assessor, on 2/5/15. He stated things are kind of slow right now.

No Historian or Old Business to report on.

**RESOLUTION #27-15**

**AUDITING THE FINANCIAL RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN**

On motion of Councilwoman Witherell, seconded by Councilwoman Stark to accept resolution entitled "Resolution Auditing the Financial Records of the Town of Fort Ann."

ADOPTED	AYES 4	Witherell, Stark, Dumas, Varney
	ABSTAIN	Denison

**RESOLVED**, that the Fort Ann Town Board audited the financial records of the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Town Justice and Supervisor for the fiscal year January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 at a special meeting held on January 15, 2015.

Correspondence: Supervisor Dumas read a thank you note that she received from the Queen Ann Senior Citizens thanking the Town Board for their stipend that helps fund trips, plays, etc. that their organization likes to attend.

Councilwoman Witherell asked why the Assessor hasn't been to a Town Board meeting yet to introduce himself. Supervisor Dumas replied that it was her fault because of the weather she has not asked or expected him to attend but she did have an email to read from Mr. Bonanno.

"Things are moving along at a steady pace in the assessor's office. When MAS (Municipal Assessment Services) took over the assessor position the yearly work load was significantly behind schedule.

Exemptions are the most time consuming activity in the assessor's office. Little if any work on exemptions had been done by the prior assessor for this cycle. In order to catch up both Mike and I have worked full days in the office plus extra time off site printing forms and contacting tax payers. We have mailed out some 334 exemption notifications to date. So far 170 applications have been returned. We will begin an "out reach" to property owners, being with the Aged and Senior STAR exemptions. All applications must be signed and returned by March 1. There is a period of time after that, that we will still accept supporting documentation but all forms must be submitted, signed and stamped by March 1, as per New York Real Property Tax Law.

I was also surprised to find that the new construction folder was in total disarray and little work had been done resolving the issues around building permits. I spent several hours sorting out

the work and expect that we will have to spend 15-20 hours going over building plans and resolving logistical issues before we are ready to start field work. Usually this function would have been done in the summer and fall of 2014. By law the assessor is to value all real property as of March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

On the up side, I want to thank Barbara and Donna for all their help and support. They have made Mike and I welcomed and have helped us with tax payers on numerous occasions.

I have also sent a copy of the Town's RPS file to my RPS expert and he has started an analysis of the data. Once the analysis is done, we will have a clearer picture as to what future projects MAS can undertake to improve the quality of data and the support of assessments".

County Update: Have started the process of replacing the County Administrator, Kevin Hayes, who is retiring 12/31/15. Another topic of interest is arming the probation officers. Supervisor Dumas is not on the Public Safety Committee but has been attending those meetings because it is interesting and she is in favor of arming the probation officers. It is her belief "keeping the people safe that keep us safe". New York State is talking about reducing funding of childcare and the childcare helps provide daycare so that people can work. Supervisor Dumas has asked the Commissioner of Social Services to try to keep the funding so that the people that wanted to work could continue to do so.

Public Discussion was opened at 7:45 p.m.

Gene Connell was looking for more information about the centennial trail. Councilwoman Stark responded that the centennial trail is not going on private land. The idea behind this is to bring visitors to the area whether it is snowmobiling/walking/biking. The centennial trail is 100 miles around the lake.

Mary Davis, Pilot Knob Fire Company, stated that FEMA has a website with training available.

Public Discussion was closed at 7:50 p.m.

Councilman Denison mentioned he heard from Gloria Quinlan this afternoon and the email that she sent January 10, 2015 needs to be responded to. Attorney Meyer will put together a response for the Town Board.

Councilwoman Stark mentioned that she had heard from Estelle Corlew that there was a dog problem on Buttermilk Falls Road. The Town Clerk advised she was made aware of this last week by Estelle's sister and did notify animal control by email and will follow-up with them.

Councilman Varney stated he had heard that Ellsworth was connected two (2) pits. Supervisor Dumas asked the Enforcement Officer to contact DEC regarding this issue.

On motion of Councilwoman Witherell, seconded by Councilman Denison to adjourn at 7:56 p.m.

Motion was carried unanimously.

Total Abstracts:	General	\$14,024.00
	Highway	\$29,154.44

Respectively submitted,

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Barbara J. Winchell, Town Clerk

Dated: February 12, 2015