

Town of Olive
County of Ulster
State of New York
Tuesday, November 15, 2011

Minutes of the monthly audit and regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Olive held Tuesday, November 15, 2011, 7:30 pm at the Town Meeting Hall in Shokan, NY.

Members Present: Berndt Leifeld, Supervisor
 Henry Rank, Board Member
 Linda Burkhardt, Board Member
 Bruce La Monda, Board Member
 Peter Friedel, Board Member

Recording Secretary: Sylvia Rozzelle, Town Clerk

Others Present: Bill Cook, Sole Assessor; Richard Wolff, ZBA Member; Phyllis McGill, Onteora School District Superintendent; Donald Van Buren, Board Member Elect; Susan Horner, Clerk to the Supervisor; Brenda Van Leuvan, Deputy Court Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk; Jennifer Vasta, Clerk to the Highway Superintendent; Jimmy Fugel, Highway Superintendent; Janice Lanzarotta, Bookkeeper

Board Member Friedel expressed his concern that on page 78 of the October 11, 2011 minutes the complete correspondence from Teresa Meyer of the Office of the State Comptroller was not in the minutes. Town Clerk Rozzelle stated that this communication is indexed as #73-11 and is an official part of the minutes noting that what is in quotes in the minutes was also in quotes in Ms. Meyer's email. Roll vote for approving the minutes as follows: Rank, abstained (due to not receiving minutes in time to review); Burkhardt, yes; La Monda, yes; Friedel, no; and Leifeld yes.

The following correspondence was read and filed:

#78-11

Recreation Director, Gene Sorbellini, states the Olive Recreation Committee accepts Brian Beckwith's resignation as President of Olive Soccer submitted on October 10th. The committee thanks Mr. Beckwith for his years of service to this successful program. On a Leifeld/Burkhardt motion the Town Board requested a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. Beckwith.

On a La Monda/Burkhardt motion the Town Board approved payment of the following audited bills: Highway Vouchers #333-#379, \$177,647.08; General Fund Vouchers #474-#518, \$150,709.34; and Special Lighting Voucher #11, \$55.41.

Supervisor Leifeld noted cash received for September as \$62,771.54 and interest received in September as \$1,109.82.

On a Leifeld/La Monda motion the Town Board approved the following budget modifications for the General Fund:

- Transfer \$1,030.00 from 1990.4 Contingency to 1480.4 Public Info and Services
- Transfer \$300.00 from 1990.4 Contingency to 1620.2 Buildings (Equipment)
- Transfer \$4,051.00 from Reserve "C" Police to 3120.4 Police (Contractual)
- Transfer \$161.00 from 1990.4 Contingency to 3510.4 Control of Dogs (Cont.)
- Transfer \$16,852.00 from Reserve "T" Consultant to 8745.4 Flood & Erosion Control (Contractual)

Transfer \$564.00 from 1990.4 Contingency to 9050.8 Unemployment Insurance

Supervisor Leifeld introduced Dr. Phyllis McGill, Superintendent of the Onteora Central School District, who also introduced Dan Spencer, Onteora School Board Member. Ms. McGill stated she has been at Onteora since February 22nd noting there is a lot of concern in the district. She distributed correspondence #79-11, the 10/25/11 Board of Education Meeting Minutes. The district has a 80% graduation rate and they are currently having a conversation on how to improve student performance. The state is saying that students are not college ready and the district is working on trying to improve their performance. She stated they know for two years in a row the district did not meet the standards for educating students with disabilities. She stated that 20% of the money the district receives needs to be set aside for tutoring students and the district will have to enter into contracts with tutoring agencies. The district has applied for grants and has received \$50,000.00 from the state. She stated that this year the state is pushing the curriculum down from the Senior year instead of up from the 1st grade. A summary of Adequate Yearly Progress shows the district is not doing well enough for the students: 4th grade, 62%; 5th grade 60%; 6th grade 70%, 7th grade, 55%; and 8th grade, 42%. She stated they know they need to do a better job and they know this is not acceptable; but, feels it's important that we know what is going on. Decreasing enrollment is an issue but feels we should even off around 1200 students. She stated she knows there have been several residents from Olive who have served on the school board and the district had asked for a five year audit. She stated she is for having a tax cap, but, the state is not telling you about the foundation aid from the state that has been suctioned out from school districts. She stated they have lost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million dollars in aid and they will lose another one million this year, so, they're down a half million dollars in the hole. She stated that by next June they expect a hundred school districts to go into the red and while the state has previously helped school districts come together with their budgets, the state does not know how they are going to deal with all these school districts going bankrupt because they have never had this before. She stated while the district is really healthy right now, in five years they will have used up \$14 million in reserves and will be \$7 million in the red. She stated we are not to be the first to go, but, that is what is going on across the state. She stated they have been able to cut staff to make the budget and there is a need for restructuring the district; but, they also have to look at student performance. The school board had a meeting discussing a four point plan and one of the points is "communication" and that is why she is present tonight. She noted they need to accumulate data, look at how to improve our school with reduced resources and explore, and then look at, how to do cuts that least affect the children. She stated they have 3 buildings that are K-6 buildings and the board is looking at everything. She stated that perhaps Woodstock and Phoenicia could focus on early learning and the other school for working on literacy as a middle school. She stated the school board will be having more meetings on the 20th.

Glenda McGee asked if anything has changed with mandates regarding class size. Ms. McGill stated the district has a recommended top class size and thinks it ranges from 23-25-27, but they are close to it in some buildings and far from it in others. She stated they lost efficiency, but, they also lost effectiveness.

Glenda McGee asked about home schooling in that it is oftentimes successful and she feels there should be a way to flip the model and have parents step up. She asked if it is possible to assign a role to parents and educate parents to be a better parent. Ms. McGill stated there are some programs the district has in place; but, the state does not mandate this. Glenda McGee stated the idea of the passive parent is a disaster educationally and socially. Ms. McGill stated as an educator she welcomes parent involvement.

Richard Wolff stated that 3 ½ years ago there was a plan being considered for this district and now there still isn't a plan in place. He noted it has been stated that the recent school board was elected because of not closing a school. He asked what the immediate plan is to close that gap without cutting into school programs. Ms. McGill stated they should have enough assistance throughout our community and they will be starting to put things out there. One of the concerns about closing a school centers on--is there a way to decrease expenditures or increase revenues. She stated they are looking at ways to increase revenues and right now she has no numbers to present to the public. One of things she realizes is that the district is over staffed and they are looking at collapsing grades.

Rita Vanacore stated that a lot of what's going on now in the district are the same problems that have been experienced over the past six years. She stated we're still talking about these problems now and we're just discussing what we should be doing to rectify them. She stated the state will not get us money because we have too much space and too few students and we're still talking about putting 180 students in each school. In two years we're going to be bankrupt and asked what are we waiting for. It's costing us over \$4 million a year to keep this building open. She stated we're talking about spreading our sparse population over five buildings. She stated that now we are talking about having a Princeton Plan and keeping the buildings open. She stated she's just really scared of what's going to happen to our school district because the board is just now researching what has already been researched. Ms. McGill stated they are coming up with more than the Princeton Plan and there will be more plans when she gets back with the school board. She stated they are talking about different ideas and different models with more firm data available on the 29th of November and in December there will be more time to work. She stated it is important to bridge the history of the district together.

Dan Spencer stated he is pleased to see the turnout here and does appreciate Ms. Vanacore's points; but, a lot has changed over the past year. He stated his goal is to protect the district. In the past there was a majority to protect their schools in the community and they felt they could do that noting they would like to keep all schools open; but, as money gets tighter everyone has come to the attention that there is a big problem out there and the board is responsive and listening.

Glenda McGee stated that first year teachers start at a higher rate than an intern out of medical school. She stated that we are currently renters and this union has cannibalized its members. She asked if there is a significant give back in their contract structure. Ms. McGill stated there are some things they can't share because they are in negotiations; but, she stated they do hear her and there are things they will be asking in negotiations. She stated they are dealing with contracts that were developed in the 80's to attract people here when the boom was on and they are not sustainable.

Dan Spencer stated they are trying to protect the district and are trying to negotiate and are looking for people willing to pitch in to the situation they are in. '

Charlie Blumstein presented correspondence #80-11 with information obtained from the NYS Report Cards at the NYS Education Department and asked why that for every 200 students we lose we lose only one teacher. Ms. McGill responded by stating that pulling class sizes together would help alleviate positions. She stated they did reduce from last year to this year and have been reviewing the services department, business office, and buildings. She stated there are some services they can have BOCES do. She stated that instead of just rolling over budgets they are really trying to scrub this budget. She stated she does assure us that she is trying to

do that personally. She stated it is important that the district give the people personal information before it becomes public and has had to tell employees that she cannot guarantee people's positions.

Charlie Blumstein stated he understands that his neighbors are being forced out because they can't afford their high taxes. Ms. McGill stated she promised that they are getting a handle on this and will be working on this.

Supervisor Leifeld introduced Wayne Turner of the Ashokan Center. Mr. Turner stated the Center is in the process of rebuilding their entire campus and in arrangement with NYC DEP they were able to get some funding for rebuilding some of their campus. They received 5.2 million from the NYCDEP towards a 7 million dollar project. He stated they have borrowed from the CWC and a grant has been written to build a public information area. If they are able to get this grant from the NYS Department of Parks and Historic Preservation then they will be able to complete their project. He stated the grant application is for approximately \$600,000.00 of which there is to be a partial match. As part of the process for applying they need a municipal endorsement from Olive. He stated he hopes that this Town Board would be willing enough to pass this resolution.

Supervisor Leifeld asked if the Board passes the resolution what obligation does the town have. Mr. Turner stated there are absolutely no strings attached for the town. Board Member La Monda stated what annoys him is that we just listened to how the state is cutting money to the school district but has \$600,000.00 to give to build an information center.

Glenda McGee stated that NY State money is our money, it ain't free. It's austerity time and she's had it. She stated she appreciates Mr. La Monda's point.

Mr. Turner stated this money is being made available, they don't have the money, they are simply applying in a competitive process for this grant. He stated their objective is to open up all the Ashokan Center and one of the ways to cover the shortfall is to apply for this grant. He stated there are no dollars out on the town side and they have submitted this proposal in hopes that they can get funding.

Rebecca Balzac stated that a lot of homeschooled and school children use the Ashokan Center. She stated she feels that limiting Olive is not beneficial and we should take advantage of what resources we now have. Ms. Balzac stated the project sounds like a great thing. She also stated she has attended many meetings with Ms. McGill and this is something that could help our school system.

Glenda McGee stated that we keep extracting money instead of attracting money. We are a stressed out community; but, it is time we draw the line on extracting money or we will turn into Greece. Glenda McGee stated that perhaps we should build a goodbye center instead of a welcome center.

Board Member La Monda stated that he knows that there is "x" millions of dollars out there for grants and would rather see it come to Olive. He stated he feels the City of New York should be paying for this since they are the ones who flooded the area.

Bob Conyeya stated it was said this will attract people from outside Olive; but, will this do something for our community. Mr. Turner stated he wants to change the previous SUNY

campus policy of prohibiting people to encouraging everyone to utilize their facility. He stated they service many schools in the Onteora School District.

Board Member Friedel stated he would like to table this issue as he needs more information. Board Member Rank stated he thought it was a good idea. Board Member Burkhardt stated that by not passing the resolution then it will put money in the pockets of someone else and would rather see a project that would benefit our community. Board Member La Monda stated this money has already been allotted.

Supervisor Leifeld introduced Resolution #12 of 2011 Endorsement for the Ashokan Foundation Grant Application Under the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Presentation Environmental Protection Fund. On a Leifeld/Rank motion and roll vote the Town Board approved Resolution #12 of 2011. Roll vote being: Rank, yes; Burkhardt, yes; La Monda, yes, stating only because the money has already been allotted; and Friedel, abstained, stating he wanted more information on this.

Rita Vanacore stated that Robert's Rules of Orders states if a member asks for more information on an issue then the board cannot proceed until that information is provided.

Mrs. Barringer asked if the board had information on this issue before tonight. Board Member La Monda stated he's in the office several days a week and was aware of it. Board Member Burkhardt stated she was in the office and was aware of it. Board Member Friedel stated it should have been given out at the Thursday night meeting.

On a Leifeld/La Monda motion and roll vote the Town Board approved the 2012 Budget. Roll vote being: Rank, yes; Burkhardt, yes; La Monda, yes, stating he complimented the Supervisor and Bookkeeper for keeping the budget low; Friedel, no; only because it was not a 0% increase; and Leifeld, yes.

Supervisor Leifeld stated the town is developing a new website. On a Burkhardt/Friedel motion the Town Board requested a letter of thanks be sent to David Edinger for his volunteer work on the previous website.

On a Leifeld/La Monda motion the Town Board approved rebidding the fuel tanks damaged by Hurricane Irene as the previous specifications did not include SPOT-10 compliant.

On a Leifeld/Burkhardt motion the Town Board approved reappointing Dennis Morley to the Board of Assessment Review. His term will expire 9/30/16.

The following committee reports were submitted:

RECREATION liaison Board Member Burkhardt submitted November Committee report #81-11 noting youth basketball will begin in late December, youth soccer is being reorganized for the 2011 season, and youth baseball is merged into one league throughout the Onteora School District. Olive Recreation in conjunction with Belleayre will again be offering discount lift tickets for 26 days. A registration will be held on December 10th at the Town Meeting Hall from 10 a.m. until 12 noon.

Resolution #12 of 2011
Town of Olive
Endorsement for the Ashokan Foundation Grant Application Under
the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Presentation
Environmental Protection Fund

WHEREAS, the Ashokan Foundation, Inc. is applying to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) for a grant under the Environmental Protection Fund for a park project to be located in Olivebridge, a site located within the territorial jurisdiction of this Board; and

WHEREAS, as a requirement under the rules of these programs, said not-for-profit corporation must obtain the approval/endorsement of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be located;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Town Board of the Town of Olive, New York hereby approve and endorse the application of the Ashokan Foundation for a grant under the Environmental Protection Fund for a park project known as Public Welcome Center of the Ashokan Center and located within this community.

	Aye	Nay
Berndt Leifeld, Supervisor	_____	_____
Henry Rank, Board Member	_____	_____
Linda Burkhardt, Board Member	_____	_____
Bruce La Monda, Board Member	_____	_____
Peter Friedel, Board Member	_____	_____

Dated this 15th day of November, 2011

Sylvia B. Rozzelle, Town Clerk

POLICE Commissioner La Monda submitted October report #82-11 showing the total amount of monthly calls as 148.

FIRE DEPARTMENT October report #83-11 showed a total of 61 calls for the month.

HIGHWAY liaison Board Member Rank stated the Highway Department is finishing work on Weber Lane.

TOWN CLERK October report #84-11 showed \$47,310.38 in monthly revenues. Olive Free Library Director's Report for October #85-11 noted that an album of old Town of Olive photos was donated to the library from Marian Green in West Oneonta. They will be available in the history room.

Supervisor Leifeld stated that the past few weeks he kept hearing that he didn't do anything right with FEMA and today he received a phone call stating the town will receive 75% funding and perhaps even 90%. He stated the Town of Olive is one of the few towns that have already been approved for funding by FEMA. He stated he learned this morning at the Supervisor's meeting there are many towns that haven't even seen FEMA yet. Board Member Friedel stated if we get the 90% will we still get the state to pay 12.5%. Supervisor Leifeld stated we will not know that until later.

Mrs. Purdy stated there are areas in Olivebridge that were without telephone service for over ten days and that same area has been hit again. Helen Jeffs stated she has been out of phone service since this past Thursday and they keep saying that nothing is wrong with it. Supervisor Leifeld asked what service she has to which she answered Verizon. He stated he will call them tomorrow.

On a Leifeld/Friedel motion the Town Board approved a page in the Minute Book be dedicated in memory of Ernie Gardner.

All business pertinent having been discussed the Town Board adjourned at 9:15 pm on a Leifeld/La Monda motion in memory of Ernest J. Gardner, Dora K. Grant, Jason Jones, Carl Olson, and Carlos A. Santiago, Jr.

This Page Dedicated

In Memory of

Ernest J. Gardner

Lifelong area resident

Enlisted U. S. Air Force in 1944

Served in Air Force Reserves until 1985
at the rank of Lt. Colonel

Ulster County Legislator for 16 years

Past Commander of Olive Memorial Post 1627
American Legion

Past Commander of Ulster County American Legion