



Minutes

Town of Cairo

Monday August 1st, 2022

Town Board Meeting @ 7:00 pm

Location: Town Hall Meeting Room

The Town Board of the Town of Cairo met for a Town Board Meeting on Monday, August 1st, 2022, at the Town Hall, Main Street, Cairo, New York. Supervisor Watts called the meeting to order @ 7:00pm and asked the attendees to Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Attendance: Supervisor Watts, Council Member Bogins, Council Member Flaherty, Council Member Powers.

Absent: Council Member Cords

Approval of the Minutes:

July 11th, 2022:

Offered by Council Member Flaherty and seconded by Council Member Bogins.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

New Business:

- Sylvia Hasenkopf – Submission to the natural landmark program.
 - Sylvia first reads her letter to the board about the fossil forest in the Town of Cairo;
 - In 2014, the first murmurings of a significant scientific paleo discovery were beginning to be shared in the scientific community and locally. An international team of scientists who specialized in primeval fossil sites arrived in the Town of Cairo, New York to begin their investigations into the fossils found in the bed of the old quarry site on Rte. 145. Today this site is located on town property where the Cairo Highway Department is situated. Formerly, however, it was the site of the old Peckham Stone Quarry. This news came to the attention of the Cairo Historical Society, who's Board of Directors shared the excitement of the scientific community. As a historical society we are always mindful of our mission - to collect, study, interpret and preserve the history of the Town of Cairo, New York for the educational and cultural enrichment of present and future generations. We decided that every effort should be made to ensure that the site would be protected to the fullest extent of the law, and resolved to obtain the support and approval of the then Cairo Town Board in our efforts to seek the nomination and approval of the site to the National Register of Historic Places at both the State and National levels. A presentation was made by Sylvia Hasenkopf to the Town Board and a resolution was unanimously agreed upon to support this initiative. On July 14, 2014, the Cairo Historical Society received the Statement of Owner Support, signed by Ted Banta, the then Town Supervisor. Discussions began with the National Parks Service, State Historic Preservation Office in 2014.

The Cairo Historical Society prepared a proposal and secured supporting documentation from Dr. William Stein, Paleo biologist and Professor of Biological Sciences at SUNY Binghamton, one of the lead scientists on the project. The proposal was submitted in 2014.

As is not uncommon in government, it took a couple of years before our proposal was activated, due to the backlogs at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Frankly, no one at SHPO knew what to do with the proposal. It was a unique request and there were no staff member's onsite that had any paleo training or experience. SHPO requests are primarily for buildings, common areas or cemeteries – places with human interactions of one kind or another. Our advisor requested that we obtain more information from the scientific researcher's onsite. Why was this site so important and how did it differ from the Gilboa Prehistoric Forest?

These answers would have to wait until the multi-year investigations of the quarry site were completed and the scientific paper published.

The final report by Drs. William E. Stein, Christopher M. Berry, Jennifer L. Morris et al, entitled "Mid-Devonian Archaeopteryx Roots Signal Revolutionary Change in Earliest Fossil Forests" was finally published on February 3, 2020 in Current Biology. This report clearly stated that the Cairo Fossil Forest was of enormous import to the scientific community and the world because it was the world's oldest fossil forest and demonstrated an evolutionary linkage between ferns and trees.

Once this report was shared with SHPO shortly after its publication, the world came to a standstill because of COVID-19. In June 2021, the Cairo Historical Society was notified by SHPO that they felt that the site did not belong on the National Register of Historic Places, primarily because there was no human involvement at the site.

They felt, however that the site would be well suited to the National Natural Landmark Program.

In June 2021, Sylvia Hasenkopf reached out to Deb Diquinzio at the Natural Parks Service who oversees the administration of the National Natural Landmark Program for the area in which the Cairo Fossil Forest is sited. She forwarded the application criteria to the Cairo Historical Society.

As this application is quite technical in scope, requiring geological expertise, Sylvia Hasenkopf reached out to Dr. Robert Titus and Dr. Johanna Titus, renowned experts in the ancient geology and flora of the Catskill Mountains. They kindly assisted in the completion of the proposal for the Cairo Fossil Forest Area as a potential National Natural Landmark. This proposal is now in the hands of the National Parks Service.

One of the issues you may be concerned about was the potential restrictions of land use, if the Cairo Fossil Forest is designated as a National Natural Landmark. Deb Diquinzio was kind enough to answer this question:

"Designation encourages informed decisions that minimize impacts to a site's significant resources (i.e., such as thoughtful siting of any new structures). However, there are no restrictions imposed by the National Parks Service on what the landowner chooses to do with their land. There are many designated National Natural Landmark sites, like Albany Pine Bush and cave sites that operate not only educational, but even commercial operations. Educational facilities are not counter to or inconsistent with the intent of National Natural Landmark designation."

The purpose of my visit today is to request a reaffirmation of the support of the Cairo Town Board on the proposal by the Cairo Historical Society to have the Cairo Fossil Forest Area designated as a National Natural Landmark.

- Supervisor Watts asks if this will impact any grants that the Town is going for, Sylvia states that it will not. Watts then addresses that he was waiting to hear from Joseph Hasenkopf about any other opinions and possible outcomes for grants. Sylvia addresses that you shouldn't have to wait to hear from Joe that you can do whatever you want with you land; that this one thing shouldn't affect the other and has nothing to do with the other. This designation would have no impact on what Joe is doing for possible grants. Watts wants both team on the same page and working together if possible, he can put something together for the workshop with a possible resolution.
- Council Member Powers states that what Sylvia is trying to do could possibly improve our chances of grants, Flaherty agrees with this. Watts just want Joe to get back to him to address all of the facts and opinions. Watts then asks what the purpose is of the group then, Sylvia states she had never heard of the group until about a month ago and has been doing research on this for 8 years.
- Watts would like to address it with a little more time and put up a resolution with the correct information at the next meeting.

Old Business

○ William Dinger Road – Janet Joralemon

- Janet would like something done about the property since nothing has been done since the first discussions of this property on Aug. 2nd, 2021. Since the start of all of this she has had a hard time getting a hold of the past supervisor and the current supervisor; she would like some answers. Tal stated that he has been in contact with her attorney about when the funding would be available.

Watts explains that even though it was approved to be bought the money was never approved for the 2022 budget. He then asks former Supervisor Coyne, who is in the audience, what the overall use of the property was going to be used for. Coyne states the expansion of other properties and that it could benefit the Town according to what Delaware Engineering told Coyne. Coyne states that there was money in water and sewer but Watts says he can't justify the purchase of the property going through with that money.

The requests the Janet would like are as follows; would like full access to the whole path from 32 to Bross St., would like the barrels taken down, would like the gate and locks on Bross St. taken down, enough room for a truck or car to go through; the original paper road to be open and the Town to take care of it. Whoever purchases this property whether it is the Town or not should have access to the roadway.

The board will or has gone over paperwork from last year that Janet had made up. The Town would not bring it up to specs as a Town road, the new owners, whoever that is would have to bring it up to specs when necessary. Tal will work with the ladies so this can be resolved as soon as possible. They would also like a sign stating the name of the road back on 32.

Talk of the grant that the Town applied through Hudson River Greene Way was originally for the bike path, sidewalks and would go to the side of any roads. The original plan, which did not happen, was the sidewalk to go all the way around Town. Down Main St. around Cumberland and down William Dinger, essentially making it not accessible for vehicles. Anything that may happen in the future, a road and a bike path can be put in side by side.

Ed Forrester states that William Dinger, named after William Dinger who died in Korea and was a Cairo Graduate, does not go all the way to 32. Ray Pacifico says that you cannot land lock property.

The property was purchased about 20 years ago by Janet's father. The ladies state that there is a lot of potential for the next owners, nothing can be figured out with this property until they figure out what rights the Town has to the property.

Mike Lamanac does say that the Town did have an easement for Sewer and Water through the Miller property to William Dinger; it has since been released.

Allen Veverka thought that the property was signed over to the Town in the past because of the railroad, that the Town of Cairo should actually own that property according to past paperwork. Janet would just like this done and complete on paper with the attorney's. Tal will work with the information provided to determine who owns where and what.

Janet is requesting where all the water lines are, Watts states that there are not water lines just a sewer line. Lamanac states there is a water line but not completely through the property. She would like all the info on water and sewer lines overall. If someone purchases this property and wants it to be commercial, can that be done? Watts says it would be looked into and changed with resolutions.

Discussions of how good the well actually is on this property is sold and what can be done if someone purchases the property for commercial.

Janet would like this done as soon as possible, has been long enough, Watts agrees.

- Planning Board Vacancy
 - Powers mentions the vacancy from last month, is wondering if this position has been put in the paper yet and if there are any potential interviewees. Would like a movement with this.
- Library Contract
 - Powers addresses the contract that was approved by the board for the Supervisor to sign with the Friends of the Cairo Library to use the DOJO, just wondering if this has been signed. Watts states that he has been trying to meet up with the Library and with a notary at the same time to sign off on this. Tal charged one hour of his time to write up this contract, \$125.00.

Public Comment:

- Sylvia does mentions the question ‘can national park service provide NL landowners with funds to manage their resources? Not typically however park service staff do look for grant opportunities and can provide assistance to any one landowners with letters and proposals for the grant process.’
- Sylvia then asks who is on the committee with Joe. Watt was not exactly sure, but maybe about 4-5 people, he will get back to her about it. Powers stated that the group is called ‘the friends of the fossil forest’ and a 501-C3.
- Sylvia would just like some answers about the group and what is going on, especially when the geologist are not sure of this either. When she approached Joe about any info on this group, he didn’t have much to say and didn’t say exactly who was on this committee.
- 2 Gentleman from Doman Road came to address the board on how the speed limit on Doman Road was approved for a change but would like to know when this will be taken care of. There are a lot of hazards on the road that can be hit and cause damages and injury; horses, children, homes close to the road. Would just like to see if the process could be quicker somehow. Council Member Flaherty does mention that he did talk to Art about reaching out to the County about this issue, it could take up to 2 years. Resolutions have been made and approved, unfortunately it’s a waiting game. Possibility of reaching out to the county members and see if they can move anything as well.

Enter Executive Session @ 7:48pm

Offered by Council Member Flaherty and seconded by Council Member Bogins.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

Exit Executive Session @ 8:15pm

Offered by Council Member Flaherty and seconded by Council Member Bogins.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

Resolution No. 2022-165 “Authorizing a Public Hearing”

Offered by Council Member Bogins and seconded by Supervisor Watts.

WHEREAS, the Town of Cairo is proposing a new Town Local Law on the “Town of Cairo Solar Energy System PILOT Law”,

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing is necessary prior to the adoption of any Law. Therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED, that on Wednesday, August 17th, 2022 at 7:00 pm, at the Cairo Town Hall, the Cairo Town Board shall hold a Public Hearing to enact the local law.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

Resolution No. 2022-166 “Authorize Supervisor to Sign Town Hall HVAC Proposal from Barton & Loguidice”

Offered by Supervisor Watts and Council Member Bogins.

WHEREAS, Barton & Loguidice has provided a proposal for the Professional Services related to upgrading the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems at the Town Hall building.

WHEREAS, Barton & Loguidice have provided the Town of Cairo with Construction Cost Estimates and Fee Proposals.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Cairo Town Board does hereby authorize the Supervisor to sign the Terms and Conditions proposed by Barton & Loguidice to proceed with the Town Hall Building HVAC Renovations with the total of \$43,000.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

Resolution No. 2022-167 “Authorize Supervisor to Sign Agreement with Delaware Engineering to Amend Zoning Law and Zoning Map”

TABLED TILL NEXT MEETING

Committee Reports:

- Ambulance:
 - 80 calls for June/53 transported calls
- Animal Control:
 - 23 calls for the months of July
- Assessor:
 - 33 sales/transfers for the month of June; 12 valid sales
- Building and Code:
 - 23 building permits/12 municipal searches
 - 7 certificates of occupancy/12 certificates of compliance
 - 3 new violations/complaints
 - 1 court case for trial/2 cases in court/33 inspections
- Highway (July):
 - Two international CV’s are on order and have a build date of October 2022
 - International HX Tandem was delivered/Mowing along shoulders is continuing
 - Crews working on temporary pothole repair and ditch cleanouts
 - 7 employee have been vaccinated against Covid/6 employees have had Covid
 - Masks, sanitizer and gloves still available to all employees
 - Culverts and tree limbs are currently the main focus
- Upcoming for Highway:
 - Paving to begin later this month/Shoulder work will be commencing
 - Bald hill south, maple lawn, beers road and Middlefield road have been listed for re-surfacing this year
- Library:
 - Wi-Fi Use for June 564/Circulation of 2,390 items
 - Attendance of 1,078/Community room use of 40/Computer use of 172
 - 202 reference checks/13 new library cards

- Programs @ library:
 - Summer reading program/Storytime
 - Yoga on Tues. and Thurs./Take and make craft for children
 - Kids graphic novel book club/Book club for adults
- Tax Collector:
 - Total collected as of July 2022; \$7,182,073.60

Adjourn Town Board Meeting @ 8:27PM

Offered by Council Member Flaherty and seconded by Council Member Bogins.

Supervisor Watts – Aye, Council Member Bogins – Aye, Council Member Cords – Absent, Council Member Flaherty – Aye, Council Member Powers – Aye. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted

Kayla L. McAlister
Town Clerk