



# The Town of Franklin

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## Town of Franklin Board Meetings

**May 14, 2007 - 7:00 pm**

**The Town Board of the Town of Franklin held a regularly scheduled Board meeting on Monday, May 14, 2007 at 7:00 pm at the Vermontville Town Hall.**

### Board members present:

Supervisor Mary Ellen Keith  
Councilman Gene Goff  
Councilman Tim Goff  
Councilperson Janet Ordway  
Councilman Walt Kretser

### Resident's Present:

Al Berg  
Addison Bickford  
Vince Catlin  
Mark Kurtz  
Richard Jarvis  
John & Cynthia Gorgas  
Robert Weigold  
Tom Martus  
Ray Tempestelli

### Others Present:

Town Clerk Sandra Oliver

### Press Present:

Jacob Resneck, Adirondack Daily Enterprise

### CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Keith called the meeting to order; the Pledge of Allegiance was recited; the Town Clerk called the roll, and announced the full board was present. Supervisor Keith welcomed all present. She stated the agenda was full, and requested those present to refrain from commenting until the appropriate times.

## AUDIT OF BILLS

### The following claims were presented and reviewed by the Board::

General	Warrant #5	Claims 94 - 114	\$6,995.99
Highway	Warrant #5	Claim 74 - 91	\$19,460.89
Prepay General	Warrant #4	Claims 20 - 32	\$9,902.80
Landfill	Warrant #2	Claim 3	\$322.00

Motion to approve bills and pay same (G.Goff-W.Kretser m/s/p) ALL AYE

## MINUTES OF MEETINGS

The minutes of the April 9 regular and April 23 special board meetings were presented for acceptance. The April 9, 2007 minutes were accepted as presented. The April 23, 2007 special board meeting minutes were amended as follows:

### MINUTES OF SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING April 23, 2007 - 5:00 pm

The Town Board of the Town of Franklin held a regularly scheduled Board meeting on Monday, April 23, 2007 at 7:00 5:00 pm at the Vermontville Town Hall. (changes per 5/14/07 meeting)

Supervisor Keith noted that the proposed public meeting mentioned under Correspondence in the April 23rd minutes concerning an area-wide retail size cap had not yet been scheduled.

Motion to accept April 9 minutes as presented and April 23 minutes as amended (G.Goff-J.Ordway m/s/p) ALL AYE

## SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Balances on hand at April 1, 2007

<b>General Fund</b>	CK	\$5,276.38
	SV	\$75,208.94
	CLASS	\$266,339.43
<b>Highway Fund</b>	CK	\$29,222.70
	SV	\$98,055.06
	CLASS	\$391,089.21
	Cap Proj Hwy	\$22,889.35
<b>Landfill</b>	CK	\$2,893.70
	CLASS	\$63,200.90
<b>Fire</b>	CK	\$10,231.04
	CLASS	\$4,649.61
<b>Cap. Building</b>	CLASS	\$143,534.69

Supervisor Keith stated the proceeds received as a result of the sale of the old tractor would be shown in next month's Supervisor's Report. Coun. Gene Goff noted that the total amount of interest the Town garnered for the month as a result of the different interest-bearing accounts was \$4,178.00. He also noted that the Town was required to keep approximately \$63,000.00 in a landfill fund.

Motion to accept Supervisor's Report (W.Kretser-T.Goff m/s/p) ALL AYE

## HIGHWAY REPORT

Highway Supt. James Rascoe is on vacation; Deputy Hwy. Supt. Eric Merrill submitted a written report, presented by Coun. Gene Goff:

### 1. PROGRESS OF DEPARTMENT

1. All plowing and sanding finished as of April 18, 2007
2. Brooming has commenced
3. Potholes have been cold-patched
4. Department preparing for summer projects
5. The bucket on the backhoe had problems with rocks and brush falling back, causing damage to the arms carrying the bucket. Mechanic James Perry fabricated arm protection for the backhoe

bucket for \$150. A new arm protector would have cost \$3,200.

## 2. SWEEPERS.

a. New Holland 2-Motor Sweepster. The new sweeper has been returned to Burke Farm Supply due to defective manufacture. The defective spindle is in the shaft. The entire unit will be replaced, per warranty.

b. Tow-Behind Sweeper. This 7-yr-old sweeper is out of service has been transported to a repair facility, and the estimate received is \$4,600. Town of Franklin Highway Dept. Mechanic James Perry thinks he might be able to repair the unit for \$1,500. According to the quotes provided by Deputy Supt. Merrill, a new tow-behind sweeper would cost approximately \$20,000.

## 3. HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

a. Sweepers. The sweepers have been out of service for 2-3 weeks. Coun. Kretser opined Mechanic James Perry should try to repair the tow-behind sweeper; and he if can't repair it, perhaps the Department should arrange to borrow a sweeper from another municipality or perhaps rent one. Supv. Keith added the Town has entered into shared services agreement with neighboring towns. Coun. Gene Goff concurred, adding the Town was not in a position to purchase a new tow-behind for \$20,000.

Motion to authorize repair of tow-behind sweeper by Highway Dept. mechanic (G.Goff-W.Kretser m/s/p) ALL AYE

## 4. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS RE HIGHWAY MATTERS.

Questions concerned clarification of sweeper problems and whether the Town had any mechanism in place to borrow equipment from other municipalities.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Coun. Walt Kretser reported that APA representative Brian Grisi had sent a large package of documents to him and Coun. Ordway. The package contained samples of planning and subdivision regulations used by other communities. The materials are still being reviewed. Coun. Kretser stated Keith Silliman, a lawyer and head of the Loon Lake Property Owners Assn., had volunteered his expertise and services with respect to planning. Mr. Silliman is well experienced in this area and will attend the June board meeting. Coun. Kretser indicated he and Coun. Ordway would make a recommendation to the Town Board at the June meeting concerning subdivision regulations only - not a comprehensive plan.

## NEW BUSINESS

**1. NYS COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND COMPETITIVENESS.** Supv. Keith reported she had received an announcement from Gov. Spitzer's office regarding same. The panel is comprised of Lake Placid Mayor Jamie Rogers, Town of Brighton (Monroe Co.) Supervisor Sandra Frankel, and State Senator Betty Little. The purpose of the Commission is to make recommendations on measures to be adopted to facilitate and expedite partnership among State and local governments to streamline government and cut costs. The Commission has asked that each local government identify one major merger/consolidation, shared service or smart growth initiative already underway or planned and submit same to its county by June 15th. The Commission will interact with each county on measures to be implemented. Copies of this communication were distributed to the Town Board for their input. Supv. Keith indicated she had spoken with Franklin County Legislator Tim Burpoe and emphasized the need for real property assessment reform, as well as the need for State agencies to stay in communication with localities. Coun. Gene Goff said he would like to review the materials before making his recommendations. Coun. Walt Kretser stated it was difficult for the Town to continue to purchase new highway vehicles at \$160,000 each year and he would like to join forces with other towns to either share in the cost of such purchases or borrow same. As with the damaged sweepers, the Town should review these alternatives.

**2. HEALTH CARE FUNDING SERVICES FOR VETERANS.** Frank Karl submitted a proposed resolution in support of mandatory federal funding of health care benefits for veterans. Supervisor Keith read the proposed resolution (see below) and requested the Board adopt it. Motion for resolution supporting mandatory federal health care funding services for veterans

(M.Keith-W.Kretser m/s/p) ALL AYE

**RESOLUTION NO. 20 SUPPORT FOR MANDATORY FEDERAL FUNDING OF HEALTH CARE BENEFITS FOR VETERANS** WHEREAS, the mission and motto of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs is ♦to care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan♦; and WHEREAS, President George Washington stated, ♦The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportionate to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country♦; and WHEREAS, whenever the United States military has ever been called upon to send forces into harm's way, including sons and daughters of the Town of Franklin, they have proudly answered

the call; and WHEREAS, we, as citizens of the United States of America, have promised our troops, through military enlistment contracts, comprehensive, quality, accessible health care for those veterans honorably discharged from the United States military past, present and future; and WHEREAS, although the legislative bodies of our government at all levels have recognized the importance of supporting those who serve our great country, legislation itself has fallen short of meeting the health care needs of our veterans, and the current discretionary funding mechanisms for veterans' health care is beset by numerous flaws which prevent many veterans from receiving the quality health care they deserve and have earned; and WHEREAS, on March 16, 2006, the United States Senate voted down mandatory funding for veterans health care services (Ref: Stabenow Amendment No. 3141), which would have insured mandatory funding for our veterans' health care needs; and WHEREAS, a Government Accountability Office report in 2005 highlighted the lack of resources experienced by the Veterans Administration and its understaffed workforce as they attempt to process an increasing backlog of our veterans' claims; and WHEREAS, former Dept. of Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi has publicly stated the Dept. of Veterans Affairs has been struggling to provide promised health care services to the rapidly rising number of veterans requiring these services; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Franklin fully supports mandatory federal funding for veterans' health care services; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Franklin urges the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate move promptly to ensure that these health care obligations to our veterans be recognized by introducing and passing legislation guaranteeing full mandatory funding of veterans' health care services and that the President sign such legislation into law; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be distributed to the President of the United States and members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

Those voting aye:

Supervisor Mary Ellen Keith  
 Councilman Gene Goff  
 Councilman Tim Goff  
 Councilperson Janet Ordway  
 Councilman Walt Kretser

Those Voting nay:

None

## OLD BUSINESS

**LANDFILL MONITORING.** Supv. Keith announced that F.X. Browne's report indicated the Town had completed 8 quarters of monitoring; it will have 4 more quarters on this contract and then the Town will be able to apply for a variance to reduce inspections. The Town's contract with F.X. Browne expires before the completion of the required additional quarters, and Supv. Keith requested the Board's authorization to enter into a 6-month contract with Browne so that the 4 additional quarters can be completed.

Motion to enter into 6-month contract with F.X. Browne for landfill monitoring (M.Keith-J.Ordway m/s/p) ALL AYE

## COMMITTEES

### A. CEMETERY COMMITTEE.

(1) Restoration of Markers. Supv. Keith reported that she and Coun. Tim Goff met with Jeffrey Kuhn to contract with his firm to perform repair and restoration work of grave markers at the Union Cemetery in Vermontville and the Merrillsville Cemetery. Mr. Kuhn started work at the Vermontville site on May 14th on 18 stones that have crumbled or broken. He will repair and straighten the stones for \$3,600. A long-existing fund (from private donations) of more than \$3,100 will be used to pay for this work, along with \$500 from the budgeted Cemetery Fund. Ten grave markers at the Merrillsville site are in need of attention, and this work will cost \$2,600. Supv. Keith, Coun. T. Goff and Mr. Kuhn have already or will be in communication with families who own the markers to see if they wish the work to commence and obtain payment for same. Mr. Kuhn has also offered replacement markers of granite for \$250. The total cost of stone straightening, cleaning and replacement for both cemeteries is \$10,000 of which the Town will pay \$3,600. Supv. Keith plans to hold fund raisers, and indicated if any person wishes to donate money, they should donate to the Cemetery Committee, not to the Town (donations made payable to the Town must be deposited in the General Fund; monies received payable to the Cemetery Committee are applied directly to the Cemetery Committee fund). She opined the Town could produce another volume of ♦They Told Me So♦ books and requested stories be submitted by residents. News of upcoming events will be publicized in newsletters and on the bulletin board.

(2) Flags. Flags have been ordered and will be placed on appropriate graves for Memorial Day.

### B. RECREATION COMMITTEE.

(1) Enclosed Pavilion. Coun. Tim Goff reported he had received an estimate from Strober's for clear corrugated plastic to enclose 3 sides of the pavilion at Kate Mountain Recreation Park. The cost of the plastic is \$1,700. Coun. T. Goff is looking for volunteers to help construct the enclosure.

(2) Basketball Court. Coun. Tim Goff and his wife, Susan, will donate a basketball court painting kit and asked for volunteers to assist in the effort.

(3) Little League. Supv. Keith noted the Town's facilitate reservation calendar is filling up for the summer. The Rec Park baseball diamond is being used by local Little League on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

(4) Summer Youth Program. The summer program at the Recreation Park will commence on Monday, July 9th.

### **C. BUILDING COMMITTEE.**

Jean Baltzly reviewed the results of the most recent Building Committee meeting, held April 23rd with Ann Holland, the Town's grant writer and Terrie Martino, Adirondack North Country Assn. The Committee reviewed its history and its charge by the Town Board: to provide the Town Board with its opinion and recommendation for feasibility. The Building Committee also reviewed and discussed Yellow Wood's recommendations for Clerk of the Works, architect and contractors with expertise in green building technology, rather than employing locals. Mrs. Baltzly noted that Bob Hammond will be submitting a list of suggestions and recommendations, and then the Committee will hold one more meeting. The project requires direction from the Board. Coun. W. Kretser added that the one of the benefits of using green technology and building methods was that more grant money was available. Coun. Kretser stated engineers needed to be contacted to look at the 3 buildings involved so that the Town Board could determine bottom line cost. He noted there is funding of up to \$1 million in N Y Energy Support Services to Contractors to be trained in green building methods. Supv. Keith indicated she tried to contact 3 engineers but has been unsuccessful. Supv. Keith reported that the Town's name has been submitted for reimbursement from the Petroleum Overcharge Fund to State Senator Wright. If funds are received, they will be used for renovation. The Town still needs to get experts to submit cost estimates for grants. Coun. Kretser urged moving forward soon, as timing is important. Supv. Keith stated Capt. Sior of the Unified Court System inspected the Town's current use of space for the Justice Court and will be submitting a report on same. His recommendations could include need for a separate courthouse just like the Town of Saranac. In any event, town residents may lose use of the Town Hall for social activities. Supervisor Keith thanked the Building Committee for its hard work. Once the Building Committee has its final meeting, its work will be complete, and the Town Board will take charge of the phased projects.

### **D. CELEBRATION COMMITTEE.**

1. Background of Celebration. Supv. Keith reported on the story of the Morehouse family, whose forebears settled Negro Brook. Following the Civil War, bounty hunters working for slave owners sought to reclaim these former slaves. Residents of Franklin Falls and Bloomingdale prevented the bounty hunters from returning the freedmen. They were forced to return to the south without capturing anyone. Many freed slave families escaped to the Town - the Scotts of Paye Rd., the Minnys of Swinyer Rd and the Morehouses on the Bigelow Rd. A gentleman from this area was on Capt. Dougherty's team of men, who cornered John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln's assassin.

2. Town Celebration Day - Saturday, July 21, 2007. Town Celebration Day will recognize the Morehouse family.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

1. SCHEDULED POWER OUTAGE. National Grid advised Loon Lake service will be interrupted on Thursday, May 24 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm, or possibly on Friday, May 25.

2. SARANAC LAKE ADULT CENTER. Appreciation expressed for the Town's commitment and support of independence for senior citizens.

3. JOHN HUTCHISON. Letter sent by Mr. Hutchison concerning the Rock Street Dump. The site will be cleaned and photographic documentation will be presented in evidence of same.

4. TAX SALES OF PROPERTY IN TOWN. Supv. Keith reported that the County Treasurer confirmed only one 7-acre property of vacant swampland in the Town was to be auctioned for back taxes. Supv. Keith emphasized that no residences were being auctioned this year, and that it speaks well of taxpayers who took the time to work out a payment schedule with the Treasurer's office.

### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.**

These concerned Intermunicipal shared services, increasing fees charged to County for snow removal, clarification of contract with F.X. Browne, volunteers to work on Planning Committee and Highway Committee, request to advertise purpose of special board meetings, status of proposed conservation

easement, Adirondack Leadership Expedition - proposed fence around property, and a complaint of a logger concerning use town roads and interaction with Highway Superintendent.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm (M.Keith-J.Ordway m/s/p) ALL AYE

Respectfully submitted, Sandra J. Oliver, Town Clerk

Click here to see [past minutes](#)

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