

The Town of Bethel Town Board meeting of February 10, 2016 was called to order by Supervisor Daniel Sturm at the Dr. Duggan Community Center at 7:30 p.m.

Council members present: Mrs. Vicky Simpson
Mrs. Lillian Hendrickson
Mr. Bernie Cohen
Mrs. Dawn Ryder

Presentation: Angela Dutcher, SC Literacy Volunteers Director

Angela Dutcher introduced herself as the new Director for SC Literacy Volunteers replacing Connie Keller, Executive Director since 1994. Ms. Duthcer gave an over view of the programs being offered as follows: Dessert Extravaganza 2/21; Book Sale – next week; only two locations in Sullivan County – Bethel and Monticello, and ongoing Tutor training.

Audit of Bills

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Check</u>
General Fund	\$1,565,464.68	5793-5804, 5806-5866, 5868-5890
Highway Fund	397,344.67	3601-3649
Kauneonga Lake Sewer District	58,778.08	2452-2474
Planning/Zoning Escrow	11,575.60	1101-1104

Motion by Mrs. Simpson to approve the monthly audit bills, seconded by Mr. Cohen, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Supervisor’s Monthly Report

Mr. Sturm reviewed the supervisor’s monthly report for January 2016. Motion by Mrs. Simpson to receive and file supervisor’s monthly report, seconded by Mrs. Ryder, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Town Building Department Monthly Report

2016 January fees	\$4,712.00
2015 January fees	\$7,701.00
2016 January construction costs	\$676,700.00
2015 January construction costs	\$181,400.00

Motion by Mrs. Hendrickson to receive and file building department monthly report, seconded by Mrs. Simpson, put to a vote and carried 5.0.

Junkyard License Reports

Motion by Mr. Cohen to receive and file inspection reports and approve junkyard license renewals for Shapiro & Sons, Lyamar, and Lema junkyard licenses, seconded by Mrs. Simpson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Quote from RTS for Tailgate Chutes for new 2016 Dodge Rams

Motion by Mrs. Hendrickson to approve the quote from RTS for three (3) tailgate chutes at \$1,145.00 each for a total of \$3,435.00, seconded by Mr. Cohen, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Town Clerk’s Monthly Report

Total fees	\$4,117.90
State share	\$ 101.58
Town share	\$4,016.32

Motion by Mrs. Simpson to receive and file, seconded by Mrs Hendrickson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Correspondence from Alan Gerry

Motion by Mrs. Simpson to receive and file letter from Alan Gerry, founder of Bethel Woods, seconded by Mrs. Hendrickson, put to a vote and carried 5-0. Mr. Gerry noted that Pollstar magazine ranked Bethel Woods Center for the Arts as #29 worldwide on their list of Top 100 Worldwide Amphitheaters for 2015 and #1 in NYS for attendance in outdoor amphitheaters. Mr. Sturm stated he was very happy to get this letter and thanked the current Town Board and previous Town Boards for their support.

Correspondence from George Billard opposing Compressor Station

Motion by Mrs. Ryder to receive and file correspondence from George Billard asking the town board to pass a resolution opposing the Millennium Gas Compressor project in the Town of Highland and to initiate a public health impact study, seconded by Mrs. Simpson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

The following is a statement by Town of Bethel Supervisor, Dan Sturm:
Our biggest challenge as a town board is and has been to protect our natural resources and environment, and the health of our community. We have a town ban on fracking and heavy industrial uses specifically gas compressor stations. I would urge us to demonstrate our opposition by resolution to this Millennium Pipeline Compressor Station, which is less than 1.4 miles from our border. Once again we need to protect ourselves now for future generations.”

Correspondence from Jessica Irish opposing Compressor Station

Motion by Mrs. Ryder to receive and file correspondence from Jessica Irish dated opposing the Millennium Gas Compressor project, seconded by Mrs. Simpson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Resolution in opposition of the Highland Millennium Gas Compressor Station

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF BETHEL, SULLIVAN COUNTY, NEW YORK IN OPPOSITION TO THE COMPRESSOR STATION IN NEIGHBORING TOWN OF HIGHLAND

WHEREAS, in order to preserve its rural character and protect the health, welfare, and safety of its residents, each of the Towns of Highland and Bethel amended its zoning laws in 2012 to expressly prohibit compressor stations and other high-impact industrial uses, as those terms are defined in their respective Town Code and

WHEREAS, in December 2015, Millennium Pipeline Company, LLC, (“Millennium”) purchased 80 acres of property in the neighboring Town of Highland (the “Property”); and

WHEREAS, on January 19, 2016, Millennium filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”), to construct and operate a 22,400 HP compressor station on the Property (the “Highland Compressor”); and

WHEREAS, the Property is less than 1.5 miles from the Town of Bethel border; and

WHEREAS, compressor stations are significant sources of air pollutants, emitting volatile organic compounds such as propene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and acetone, and fine particulate matter, as well as methane; and

WHEREAS, a University of Albany research team found high levels of formaldehyde, a known human carcinogen, exceeding health-based risk levels near compressor stations; and

WHEREAS, a citizens group has measured significantly increased ambient methane after construction of Millennium's 15,000 HP compressor station in Hancock, New York (the "Hancock Compressor"); and

WHEREAS, families living within a few kilometers of Millennium's 12,000 HP compressor station in Minisink, NY, have experienced respiratory, neurological, and dermatological problems since it began operating; and

WHEREAS, air contaminants emitted by the Highland Compressor will not be confined within artificial town borders and therefore are of regional concern; and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County is currently ranked 61st out of 62 New York State counties with regard to the overall health of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association and the Medical Society of the State of New York have adopted resolutions entitled "Protecting Public Health from Natural Gas Infrastructure," which recognize the potential impact on human health associated with natural gas infrastructure and call for a government assessment of risk associated therewith; and

WHEREAS, a growing body of peer-reviewed scientific and medical literature address the health impacts associated with compressor stations, including documented correlations between health problems and residential proximity to compressor stations; and

WHEREAS, compressor stations have both accidental and planned "blowdowns" to control gas pressure, which can create a 30- to 60- meter high gas plume, last as long as three hours, and cause high levels of contaminant release; and

WHEREAS, despite the proximity of the Highland Compressor to the Town of Bethel, Millennium does not appear to be legally required to notify Bethel municipal officials, first responders, and residents of scheduled or emergency blowdowns; and

WHEREAS, the Towns of Highland, Bethel, Tusten and Lumberland, will be forced to rely on volunteer first responders in the event of a fire, explosion, or other incident at the Highland Compressor and such municipalities may bear the associated costs of emergency training and special equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bethel tax base could be negatively impacted due to the likelihood of declining property values, and the inability to promote future development, in areas near the Highland Compressor ; and

WHEREAS, while the Town of Bethel will reap no economic benefits from the Highland Compressor, it will likely bear some of the potential harms and costs related thereto; and

WHEREAS, less than two years after completion of the Hancock Compressor, Millennium's application with FERC includes constructing a second, 22,400 HP compressor station in Hancock, compounding concern about future, undisclosed expansion plans for the 80-acre Property; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bethel, like the neighboring towns of Highland, Lumberland and Tusten as well as Sullivan County, pledged to be a NYS "Climate Smart

Community,” taking numerous steps to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels in accordance with this State program; and

WHEREAS, the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan summons towns to be less energy and fossil fuel intensive while strengthening the regional economy and expanding renewable energy generation; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of the Highland Compressor is contrary to these State and regional goals and will undermine the commitments and ongoing efforts of the Town of Bethel and the County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the overall health and well-being of its residents;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Bethel Town Board expresses its opposition to the Highland Compressor station;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board urges that a full environmental review as well as an air emissions baseline assessment be conducted by independent experts acceptable to Millennium, local Highland, Bethel , Lumberland and Tusten officials, advocates and the public and funded by industry in the areas that will be directly impacted by the Highland Compressor;

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board urges that a comprehensive and transparent Health Impact Assessment, as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and the National Academy of Sciences, be conducted by an independent entity acceptable to Millennium, local Highland, Bethel , Lumberland and Tusten, officials, advocates and the public, and funded by Millennium; that this Health Impact Assessment cover cumulative short- and long-term impacts, including fugitive emissions and blowdowns, with an analysis of all materials and contaminants transiting through the compressor station, such as radium precipitate, radon, and decay products; and

RESOLVED, that the Bethel Town Board directs the Town Clerk to forward copies of this resolution to U.S., State and Local Official

On motion by Town Councilman Bernard Cohen, seconded Town Councilwoman Lillian Hendrickson and adopted by a roll call vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays on this 10th day of February, 2016 as follows:

Daniel Sturm, Town Supervisor	aye
Victoria Simpson, Town Councilwoman	aye
Lillian Hendrickson, Town Councilwoman	aye
Dawn Ryder, Town Councilwoman	aye
Bernard Cohen, Town Councilman	aye

Discussion on creation of a Bethel Cultural District Exploratory Committee

The following is a statement by Supervisor, Dan Sturm.

A cultural district is defined as a well-reorganized area of a city or town in which a high concentration of cultural facilities and programs serve as an anchor of attraction. They help strengthen local economics, create an enhanced sense of space, and deepen local cultural capacity.

Creating a cultural district in Bethel can help to brand and market the area as a place rich in the arts. It will induce creative industries to locate in Bethel by offering incentives and attracting funding, and by establishing a critical mass of activities that can build on and support each other to create a vibe.

I would like to propose tonight that we form a Bethel Cultural District Exploratory Committee to begin the discussion of establishing a Cultural District in Bethel.

I have asked Dan Gettel from the Planning Board, Chris Cunningham our grant writer and BLDC Manager to join me, and Darlene Fedun, Bethel Woods Center for the Arts CEO, Planning Commissioner of Sullivan County Freda Eisenberg, Sullivan Renaissance Executive Director, Pete Gozza, Sullivan County IDA Executive Director Steve White, and Bethel Woods Board Trustee Steve Martin.

Establish a purpose and intent for the district
Define a proposed geographic area of focus
Research other successful models – cost benefits, incentives and impacts to the community

Finally, arts and culture can be used to help with our goals of community revitalization and economic development. A cultural district can provide a mechanism to unify multiple businesses, organizations and the community in areas with significant cultural resources. To be clear, currently, we focus on farming, businesses and tourism. Anything we consider must be in support of, and in addition to, these objectives that we currently strive for. We are looking to enhance and improve what we have.

Motion by Mrs. Hendrickson to approve the creation of a Bethel Cultural District Exploratory Committee, seconded by Mrs. Simpson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Correspondence Transfer Station Employee – Jim Davis

Motion by Mrs. Simpson to receive and file letter from Jim Davis, Transfer Station employee, seconded by Mr. Cohen, put to a vote and carried 5-0. Mr. Davis is requesting a pay raise from his current rate of \$13.72/hour. Mrs. Ryder suggested to promote with title and pay raise. Mrs. Simpson suggested a raise to \$15.00 per hour. Mr. Sturm mentioned no one got raises this year. Mrs. Hendrickson suggested \$16.00 an hour.

Motion by Mrs. Ryder to raise his salary to \$15.50 per hour and change title to Senior Transfer Station Operator, seconded by Mrs. Hendrickson, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Seek sealed bids for renovations at Senior Center and Justice Court

Mr. Sturm stated that the renovations are estimated at \$76,000. The grant is \$50,000.00. Anything over will be paid out of the Building Reserve Fund. Building Reserve Fund balance is \$180,000.00 which was setup in 1998 and never used. All work is to be done by August 1, 2016. Motion by Mrs. Hendrickson to seek sealed bids for the renovations at the Senior Center and Justice Court Building, seconded by Mrs. Ryder, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Public Comment

Mr. Bandi from Orange Ave asked Mr. Cohen what he is doing about speeding in Smallwood, he promised during his campaign he would do something. Need to catch drivers, cops always in the same spots – at the entrance all the time and nowhere else. Mr. Sturm advised Mr. Bandi he will have the constables patrol more often in that area.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mrs. Hendrickson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Ryder, put to a vote and carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita J. Sheehan, Town Clerk