

Organization Town of Champion**Board Town Board****Date and Time Monday, July 2 2007 at 7:00 PM****Place Town of Champion Offices Board Room (rear of building) 10 N Broad St, West Carthage NY****Contact [Chris Vargulick](#) Town Clerk Phone (315) 493-3240 Fax(315) 493-2900****Minutes**

The Town of Champion Town Board met in regular monthly session on Monday, July 2, 2007 at 7:00pm. Present were Supervisor Buckley, Councilmen Stewart, Watkins, Buzzell, and Peck, Highway Superintendent Sech, and Attorney Farley.

Supervisor Buckley called the meeting to order and invited comments from the public. A number of persons were in attendance to comment on the proposal to rezone parcel number 76.00-2-2.1 as a Planned Development District. The following persons spoke in opposition to the rezoning proposal: Brian Peck, Gordon Lewis, Gary McBride, Greg McBride, and Frank Koster. Those persons speaking in opposition cited the following issues: agricultural, suitability of property for development, proximity of gravel pits, sewer effluent, availability of water, and drainage.

The following persons spoke in favor of the rezoning proposal: Christopher Lorence, Scott Burto, and Rick Caskinette. Those persons speaking in favor cited the following reasons: increased tax base, potential for new business or business expansion, increased sales tax revenues, provides needed single family homes and rental properties, and demonstrates willingness to work cooperatively for the benefit of the area.

In response to questions regarding tax payments, Supervisor Buckley responded that the proposed single family homes would be privately owned and taxes would be the responsibility of the property owner. Supervisor Buckley also explained the timeline for action on the application for rezoning. The Town Planning Board has 62-days to respond to the Town Board, at which time, the Town Board will resume its discussions and deliberations and take action on the application to rezone the parcel as a planned development district.

Christopher Lorence asked if the Town government has any influence on the rents being charged by DC West Carthage Associates, LLC for the former West Carthage 801 apartments. Mr. Lorence is concerned that renters will leave the area due to unreasonable rental rates. Supervisor Buckley agreed that the concerns are valid but since the housing is a private enterprise the owner may establish the rates. Mr. Burto informed members that officials have met with the owner to discuss a lower rental rate. Councilman Buzzell discussed rental rates in Florida and Connecticut and stated that he thinks that the proposed rental rates are in accordance with rates nation wide.

Public Hearing

- Proof of notice having been furnished, the public hearing on Local Law #2 for 2007 - Amending the Sewer Use Law was called to order at 7:25pm by Supervisor Buckley. No one spoke for or against the proposed action. Supervisor Buckley discussed that the intent of the law was to allow operations and maintenance personnel to inspect for illegal hook-ups, primarily sump pumps, to the sewer system. All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, the hearing was closed at 7:28pm.

Monthly Reports

- Councilmen - Mr. Buzzell reported that National Grid has received clearance from the NYSDOT to complete the necessary work, within their right-of-way, to install the new parking lot lights.
- Highway Superintendent - The Superintendent's report was read and discussed. Mark Scoville has resigned to take another position. The Scania truck was sold at public auction for \$7,500.
- Assessor - Mr. Peck questioned correspondence regarding property tax reform. Supervisor Buckley reported that the legislation was not adopted.
- Planning Board - Mr. LaBarge reported that the Planning Board will resume their discussion regarding the rezoning of parcel number 76.00-2-2.1 at their next meeting and forward a recommendation to the Town Board. Mr. Peck asked about the status of Patriot Estates. Supervisor Buckley stated that it is his understanding that the archeological report has been submitted and a decision by OPRHP is pending.
- Historian - Mrs. Thornton reported that approximately sixty five (65) persons attended the June 23rd Concert on the Green. The band "Hallpass" performed and was very well received. Dr. Tim Abel will perform a preliminary review, of that area in the park that will be impacted by the implementation of the park grant, on July 11th. The Town received a grant, in the amount of \$5,000 from the Northern NY Community Foundation, to construct a fireplace in the pavilion. The fireplace will be used to teach local youth pioneer life skills. J. Peck and G. Lewis volunteered to donate local stone for the construction. Mrs. Thornton presented a framed display including the original Champion Masonic Lodge charter signed by DeWitt Clinton, a print of a painted slate depicting the location of the original church and Masonic building that were located in the current 1800 Village Green Park, and a copy of the newspaper article written by Jeremiah Papineau and published in the Carthage Republican Tribune describing the discovery of the

charter and its subsequent restoration. Mrs. Thornton discussed a pictorial that she is working on for publication by Arcadia Publishing that will focus on the Great Carthage area and the influence exerted on our location by the Black River. The book will include approximately four hundred (400) photographs and Mrs. Thornton invited anyone with photographs that they would like to share to contact her office.

Motion by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Stewart to approve the minutes of June 4, 2007 as presented. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Buzzell to approve payment of the following bills as presented:

General #169-201.....	\$146,316.65
Highway #154-178.....	\$29,187.35
RACOG #17-23.....	\$662.76
Con WD#1 O&M #41-46.....	\$5,375.98
WD#4 O&M #9.....	\$46.25
SD#2 O&M #14-15.....	\$521.69
SD#2 Capital #4-5.....	\$1,495.99

Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The Supervisor's monthly report was read and discussed. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Buzzell to approve the report as presented. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Supervisor Buckley reviewed the monthly correspondence including a letter from Dawn Davis expressing concerns about vegetation obstructing the bridge on County Route 45. The issue will be referred to the County for action. Supervisor Buckley also read a letter from Dennis Quinn supporting the rezoning of parcel number 76.00-2-2.1 and the North Hills Community development.

New Business

- Motion by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Watkins to adopt Local Law #2 for 2007 - Amendments to the Sewer Use Law. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Supervisor Buckley informed members that the term for all appointed assessors expires 9/30/2007 and recommended the re-appointment of William Vargulick for a term of six years. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Peck to re-appoint William Vargulick as sole assessor for the Town of Champion for a term to expire 9/30/2013. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Board members reviewed a letter from Andrea O'Neil requesting the extension of WD#4 to include property located at 36851 NYS Route 26. The property is contiguous with the existing district boundaries and the water main is located in the State right-of-way. Motion by Mr. Buzzell, seconded by Mr. Stewart to direct the Town Engineer to prepare a map, plan and report and furthermore, to schedule a public hearing for comment on the proposed extension of WD#4 for August 6, 2007 at 7:15pm. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Supervisor Buckley discussed the advisability of scheduling a financial audit of the Town. The Town conducted a number of independent audits during the construction of Water Districts #1, #2, #3, and #4 and Sewer District #1. The most recent audit concluded December 31, 2001. Mr. Peck asked if the Town could require an audit of the Great Bend Fire District. Supervisor Buckley stated that the Fire District is an independent entity. Supervisor Buckley recommended the firm of Furgision & Co., CPA, PC. The firm has conducted two audits for NYS Route 3 Sewer Board and completed the audits in a timely and thorough matter. Furgision & Co. have given a verbal quote of \$3,500 to perform an audit for the 2007 fiscal year. Motion by Mr. Buzzell, seconded by Mr. Peck to authorize the 2007 audit by Furgision & Co., CPA, PC for an amount not to exceed \$3,500. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Members reviewed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and the NYS Office of Real Property Services affirming the Town's commitment to assess at 100% of value as required by Section 1573 of the Real Property Law for purposes of State Aid and to adhere to a July 1 valuation date. Motion by Mr. Buzzell, seconded by Mr. Watkins to authorize the Supervisor and Assessor to execute the Memorandum of Understanding. Vote: Mr. Stewart-aye, Mr. Watkins-aye, Mr. Buzzell-aye, Mr. Peck-nay, and Supervisor Buckley-aye. Motion carried. Mr. Watkins recognized the impact of assessments on rates and budgets and stated that it is the obligation of all taxing entities to respond judiciously.
- William Vargulick, Town Assessor, recommended that the Board authorize a townwide revaluation for the 2010 tax roll and forward a request to Jefferson County RPS for assistance. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Watkins to authorize a townwide revaluation for the 2010 tax roll with assistance from Jefferson County RPS. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Supervisor Buckley reported that the RACOG executive board voted to refer a recommendation to the component boards to reopen the former Twin Village Swimming facility for the 2008 season. Supervisor Buckley reiterated his position that the facility is unsuitable as a public swimming venue. Mr. Peck agreed stating that the swimming area is unsafe and unsanitary and lacks proper pedestrian access. Mr. Buzzell questioned alternative uses for the area. Supervisor Buckley stated that he has suggested using the venue as a picnic area and that T/Wilna Supervisor Paul Smith has suggested holding an annual children's fishing derby. Mr. Watkins agreed that there is limited visibility in the water and that water flows tend to be unpredictable but stated that he has an historical fondness for the facility. Mr. Stewart opposed the reopening of the Twin Village facility but favored a year-round swimming program through the school district. Mr. Watkins voiced concern about the Town's liability and requested an opinion of counsel. Motion by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Buzzell to permanently cease all swimming activities at the Twin Village Swimming Pool and

- furthermore, to rename the facility the RACOG Community Park and open it to the public. Vote: Mr. Stewart-aye, Mr. Watkins-nay, Mr. Buzzell-aye, Mr. Peck-aye, and Supervisor Buckley-aye. Motion carried.
- Supervisor Buckley discussed his June 25th meeting with the Jefferson and Lewis County trail coordinators and representatives of ATV clubs operating within the Town of Champion. Supervisor Buckley noted that NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law requires that all public roads opened to ATV traffic must be bi-sected by a public ATV trail. Based on available trail mapping, Supervisor Buckley recommended closing all town roads to ATV traffic with the following exceptions: Lamb Road, Eddy Road, North Lake Road, VanBrocklin Road, Line School Road (from the Lewis County line to VanBrocklin Road), Bach Road, Bach Road Extension, Watson Road, South Lake Road, Switzer Road (from Middle Road to County Route 69). Members noted that both Jackson Road and Jackson II Road would be closed since they are not bi-sected by a public trail. Mr. Buzzell supported opening all Town roads. Mr. Watkins questioned the Town's liability if a qualified abandoned road is opened for ATV traffic. Members agreed, by consensus, to request copies of the trail maps, including proposed access roads, and to ask the trail coordinators to attend the August meeting to facilitate discussion.
 - Supervisor Buckley addressed John Young and Mark Auclair recommending that they consider the concerns stated during the public forum, in regards to the parcel rezoning, including sewage effluent, the reliability of the water source, proximity to blasting in the quarry, and drainage and be prepared to respond to the concerns at the next Planning Board meeting (July 10).
 - Supervisor Buckley asked for an executive session to discuss possible litigation. Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Buzzell to go into executive session for the stated reason. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried. The executive session began at 9:23pm.
 - Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Peck to resume open session. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried. Open session resumed at 10:19pm.
 - Motion by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Stewart to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:20pm.

Christina Vargulick
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Town Clerk