

York Town Board Meeting  
June 11, 2009

Present: Supervisor Gerald L. Deming, Council Members: Lynn Parnell, Frank Rose Jr., David Deuel and Norman Gates

Absent: None

Others: Kirk Richenberg, Devin Richards, Rona Gaesser, Cody Hendrickson, Ginny Durbin, Leslie Leake, Rachel Leake, Rob Hynes, Steven Carroll, Frank Rose Sr., Lisa Semmel, Joey Semmel, Erica Semmel, Art Bernecker Jr., Michelle Dubiel, Brittany Peter, Deanna Metzger, Becka Kuhn, Chelsey Dubiel, Emily Peter, Kali Rees, Sheena Turybury, James Culver, Denise Irwin, Jessica Irwin, Amy Baron, Maureen Willies, Jessica Willies, Mary Lou Boyd, Sylva Palmer, Barb Dougherty, Mark Nash, Sally Nash, Linda Leake-Beard, Diane Skeffington, Annie Cichelli, Gretchen Crane, Gary Boyd, Alex Curry Jr., Carl Peter (Zoning & Code Enforcement Officer), George Worden Jr. (Highway Supt.)

Supervisor Deming opened the Town Board Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

RESOLUTION offered by Mrs. Parnell and seconded by Mr. Rose to approve the minutes of the May 28<sup>th</sup> Town Board Meeting and June 10<sup>th</sup> Special Town Board Meeting. Voted on and approved. Yes-5, No-0.

**PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR**

1) School Resource Officer Issue:

Supervisor Deming informed the Town Board that several people asked for permission to speak with the Town Board this evening pertaining to the funding for the School Resource Officer (SRO).

Mrs. Barb Dougherty reviewed with the Board and the members of the public a brief overview of Deputy Chichester's duties and the impact he has had at York Central School. Mrs. Dougherty stated that Deputy Chichester is a valuable line between law enforcement, the students, and parents in our community and his presence is to prevent any problems within the school before they escalate. Mrs. Dougherty continued by saying, Deputy Chichester works closely with counselors, social services and the probation department. With his numerous connections he has access to a multitude of agencies and their databases, which is invaluable. Mrs. Dougherty stated issues in our school and community have grown over the years and having a School Resource Officer in the building allows the students the opportunity to speak with him and to discuss on a more personal level their issues or concerns in order to guide them toward the right decisions. The students feel very comfortable with Officer Chichester and are

not afraid to approach him on any given situation, showing that they have a great deal of trust for him, which he has earned.

Ms. Sylva Palmer commented that she is aware of the funding issue involved with the School Resource Officer. At present time the Towns of Leicester and York have both declined in financially supporting the School Resource Officer for the upcoming year, expressing that the funds should be allocated in the school budget. Ms. Palmer asked the Town Board if they would be willing to meet with the Leicester Town Board to re-evaluate support of the program at least for the 2010 year.

Mrs. Dougherty added, due to the budget time table the School Board stated they did not have sufficient time to put funds in their budget after the Towns of York and Leicester removed support, and now ask the Board to consider their portion of the funding for one more year (\$12-14,000.00). Mrs. Dougherty stated Deputy Chichester has many programs he is involved with, the DARE Program is only one educational aspect and the students of all grades have truly benefited from his knowledge. Mrs. Dougherty commented that Sheriff John York stated "York Central is one of the safest and securest schools in Livingston County" and Assistant District Attorney Ms. Wendy Sisson also stated "York Central has the fewest number of PINS petitions, Court cases and arrests of any school in Livingston County because of the great job done by Deputy Chichester".

## **COMMENTS**

### 1) Rebecca Kuhn:

Comment: Since the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Officer Chichester has always had time for me and any issue I brought before him. I trust him. Having Deputy Chichester inside the school is an advantage to everyone. I got to know Deputy Chichester better when we were introduced to the DARE Program, and have had many additional interactions with him after that. Officer Chichester deals with a lot of issues, but is never too busy to help a student or faculty member. Please reconsider funding to keep him at York Central School.

### 2) Brittany Peter:

Comment: I have known Deputy Chichester since 5<sup>th</sup> grade when we were educated with the DARE Program. Officer Chichester has so much more to offer the students than just that program. He makes kids feel safe by just being in the school, and educates students on how to protect themselves from any given situation. We need to keep Deputy Chichester at York Central School.

### 3) Deanna Metzger:

Comment: We are very fortunate to have Deputy Chichester at York Central, and if he should leave it will be a huge loss to the students. Deputy Chichester is a person who encourages kids and is very supportive, always "building us up" and the kids trust him. Having him in the school helps the students to feel safe and is a form of protection if an issue does come about. Please re-think the decision to keep Officer Chichester at York.

4) Annie Cichelli:

Comment: I have been a copy operator at York Central School for many years, and I think the community would be amazed to see everything Deputy Chichester does over the course of a day. I would challenge any parent to shadow Gene for 1 day and then decide whether or not he is needed, he definitely is.

5) Gretchen Crane:

Comment: As a kindergarten teacher at York I have been able to see first hand the impact Deputy Chichester has on the students. He is always there to support and encourage each child with positive reinforcement which is so comforting to them, he is a true asset to the school. Many people believe the cameras installed at York are all that is needed, but cameras do not have the same effect as an actual officer on site. Mrs. Crane added, most of the cameras are located predominantly in the high school, very few are placed in the elementary. We understand funding is an issue, but no price can be put on the safety of children.

6) Michelle Dubiel:

Comment: I was hired at York Central 5 ½ years ago after the incident with the “intruder” entering the school. We were very fortunate that this individual was only looking for quick cash, finding it in a teacher’s desk drawer, but all the same uneasy knowing that a stranger had access to not only enter the school, but wander at will. Mrs. Dubiel stated, after that situation York Central School knew measures had to be taken and they implemented the School Resource Officer. Deputy Chichester has done a remarkable job educating the students as well as protecting them. Please assist us in keeping the School Resource Officer.

7) Linda Leake Beard:

Comment: I am in and out of York Central School quite frequently and have had and witnessed numerous interactions with Deputy Chichester. Deputy Chichester has always been a constant assistance to the students and facility, helping whenever and where ever possible. Ms. Beard stated in regards to response time, having to rely on Town police is not an option for us, we would be totally reliant upon the Livingston County Sheriff’s Department to protect our kids if he was not in the building. Deputy Chichester has built a strong, respectful relationship at York, the kids are not afraid of him, they trust him and go to him when issues arise. He needs to be at York Central.

8) Devin Richards:

Comment: Having a School Resource Officer in the building is comforting knowing we are doing everything we can to keep the students safe. Funding will always be an issue, but you can not put a price tag on the safety of children.

9) Lisa Semmel:

Comment: We know the funding for the School Resource Officer is an issue to be worked out, which is not a reflection on Gene himself or the job he does. Deputy Chichester has done many wonderful things for the students, most importantly making them feel comfortable in their environment. Deputy Chichester has encouraged not only my children, but many kids in getting involved in your community, he is an asset.

10) Kali Rees:

Comment: Deputy Chichester has been very helpful in educating kids on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. He always gives students sound advice, with my brother being one of those kids. While others step away from issues Deputy Chichester is always willing to work with us to find a solution. Because of the advice given, my brother is now on the right track.

**\*\* A written comment was prepared and submitted by Jill Foote (See below)**

“I am the Director at the Leicester Kid’s Place Before and After School Program in York Central School. Over the past two years Officer Chichester has been to visit our program on several occasions. A couple of times on official business when some of the children needed a reminder about how to behave with other children. He has also stopped in just to say hi. He has spoken to the children about bullying, personal safety, stealing, and gun safety. The children remember his visits, and we speak about the job he does for our school everyday. Each child in the program knows who he is and that he is here to keep all of us safe. They respect not only the uniform he wears but also the person he is. Most mornings he greets each child as they get off the bus and during the day he says hello to everyone in the halls. I feel and I know that others share my feelings as well (Leicester Kid’s Place staff) that his presence gives the children a positive image of what a police officer does and stands for. Most children only get to see police officers through their parent’s eyes with the negativity that those parents are feeling because of a negative situation. With him being in our school every day the children get to have positive interactions with our local law enforcement agencies. Think about what a benefit that is for the children to remember those positive feelings and carry them on through the rest of their decision making years. Maybe the interactions with Officer Chichester will help them to make good decisions in their adult lives and keep these children out of trouble. He is resource for children as well as the adults at our school. He is a reassuring presence for not only the teachers but the parents and children as well. I believe his presence has made the children think twice before misbehaving.

Please take some time and really think about what a difference he has made in the lives of the children he touches on a daily basis. When you make this decision remember it not only affects the children at this school but the staff and parents as well. We know that he has to be paid but we feel at Leicester Kid’s Place that his salary is one that is well worth it since he is making such a positive difference in the lives of the children at York Central School.”

Supervisor Deming stated he wished to clarify one point regarding the funding of the School Resource Officer Program. A comment was made earlier this evening that the School Board did not have sufficient time to adjust their budget line item for the Resource Officer after the Towns of York and Leicester withdrew their financial support. Mr. Deming stated he spoke with Tom Manko several times within the year expressing the thoughts and the potential decision of the two boards, giving the school ample time to re-evaluate their budget, but chose not to.

Councilman Rose agreed with Supervisor Deming that the School Board was aware that the two townships might not participate in funding of the School Resource Officer in plenty of time. In fact the Town of York requested a meeting with the Town of Leicester, York Central School Board and Deputy Chichester last year (July 8, 2008) to discuss the School Resource Officer and his duties further. Board members from Leicester and York, Major Szczesniak and Deputy Chichester were in attendance but no members from the York School Board were able to make the meeting. Mr. Rose recommended to the public that they make this presentation to the York School Board as well, to reinforce their support of the School Resource Officer position.

Supervisor Deming thanked the public for coming this evening and for their comments pertaining to Deputy Chichester's position as the School Resource Officer.

## **HIGHWAY**

### 1) County:

Highway Supt., Mr. Worden informed the Board that the Highway crew has been doing a great deal of work for the County, specifically on River Road.

### 2) Signs:

Mr. Worden stated we are still waiting for Mr. Barefoot to deliver the signs prepared by the Livingston County Highway Department outlining the achievements made by York Central School students.

### 3) Playground:

Mr. Worden indicated he has spoken with Dutch VanRy several times regarding the Piffard playground and the existing equipment. Mr. Worden offered to Mr. VanRy any assistance needed in the future at the playground, not to hesitate to contact him.

### 4) Brine:

Mr. Worden informed the Town Board that the Highway Supt. Training session held last week in Ithaca was very informative. One of the topics of discussion dealt with brine material and educated the members on usage.

### 5) Industrial Appraisal:

Mr. Worden stated he spoke today with Billie Jo from Industrial Appraisal about the changes and corrections made to the highway worksheets. Billie Jo asked Mr. Worden to review the documentation a final time before the report is printed, which he agreed to do.

## **WATER/SEWER**

### 1) Meter Pits:

Mr. Barrett reported that the Water Department will be completing the installation of the manholes and meter pits for Joe Cuzzo and Sam Swearingen within the next two weeks. Once completed, we will then focus on restoration of the properties in a timely fashion. Mr. Barrett stated Mr. Swearingen has already outlined to him where he wishes to have his tap placed on

Chandler Road, which he expressed no hurry for. Mr. Barrett assured him that the tap will be installed before he needs it in the fall.

2) DEC Regulations:

Mr. Barrett stated we are continuing to investigate the best solution for metering, to satisfy DEC Regulations for the re-circulation of effluent from the trickle filter back to the dousing chamber. The magnetic meter indicates our flow, which DEC is constantly inquiring about.

3) Treatment Plant:

Mr. Barrett stated that the treatment plant is running smoothly and for the past two months we have not received any calls from the community regarding pump station malfunctions.

4) Industrial Appraisal:

Mr. Barrett stated he also spoke with Billie Jo of Industrial Appraisal. Many of the corrections have already been made, but will verify the material one final time.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR** continued

2) Gary Boyd:

Mr. Boyd informed the Board that he also intended to speak with them this evening on the SRO position, but believes the group earlier covered his thoughts as well as the rest of the community.

Mr. Boyd did state he also wished to discuss with the Board a zoning matter. He understands that the Town has been focusing on signs recently, but hopes that junk vehicles can be addressed once again. Mr. Boyd stated that this issue should be a priority because some properties are in dire need of attention, and we should encourage the residents to care for their homes. Legally the Town of York has one listing for a Junk Dealer's license-Ralph Flynn, everyone else throughout the township should be required to maintain their property, otherwise a written zoning violation should be issued. Mr. Boyd added, if the residents are not able to maintain their properties the town should inform them of the option of fencing which would at least "hide" the excess.

3) Carl Peter:

Mr. Peter informed the Board that he spoke with the Fire Department's Attorney this evening inquiring if any correspondence has taken place with the Town's Attorney, Mr. Coniglio. Mr. Peter was told that both Attorneys have yet to get in touch with one another as of 6:00p.m. this evening, and asked the Board if we can schedule a meeting to discuss the issues further.

Supervisor Deming stated, at the Special Town Board Meeting last night the Board did discuss the need to meet with the Fire Department once again, with each of the Attorneys present as well. The Board approved after the recommendation by Mr. Coniglio, to have two members from the Board meet with the Fire Department personnel, and asked Mr. Coniglio to relay that information. Mr. Deming stated he will contact Mr. Coniglio in the morning to verify if he has made contact with the Fire Departments Attorney.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1) Water Service Restoration:

a- Tracy Parsons

RESOLUTION offered by Mrs. Parnell and second by Mr. Gates to approve the Water Service Restoration request submitted by Tracy Parsons in the amount of \$200.00 for the property located at 3564 Tenth Street in Retsof. Voted on and approved, Yes-3, No-0.

2) Youth Funding:

Supervisor Deming informed the Board that the state funding for the Youth program continues to dwindle each year. We were recently notified that we will be receiving only \$2,700.00 this year, which is a decrease of \$1,800 from last year. Mr. Deming stated he is very concerned about the future of the program once the State funding is removed completely, which he foresees is not too far away.

3) Tour:

Mr. Deming stated he recently spoke with Town Historian Steve Gates about scheduling a tour for the public of the Town of York cemeteries. The Board agreed it would be a wonderful tour, but suggested that it be slated for August-September time frame due to the very busy summer schedule of events. Supervisor Deming stated he will contact Mr. Gates to convey the Board's interest.

4) Arkema:

Mrs. Parnell gave a report after the most recent Arkema CAP committee meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>. She informed the Board on what has taken place over the past few months. In February of this year a 10% layoff occurred (5 people) and week long shut-downs have continued to happen during the Christmas and Easter time frames. Arkema plans to shut down during 4<sup>th</sup> of July as well and reports indicate that Arkema's production has decreased 35-45%. Mrs. Parnell stated that the next CAP meeting will take place in the fall and all interested persons are welcome.

**BILLS**

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Gates and seconded by Mrs. Parnell to approve all claims brought before the Board. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0.

- Sewer Districts # 94-100 \$122,557.17
- Consolidated Water #124-140 \$ 3,829.23
- General Fund Claim #193-209 \$ 11,278.67
- Highway Fund Claim # 85-94 \$ 6,980.93

OTHER

1) Black top purchase:

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Gates and seconded by Mr. Rose to approve black topping of River Road, in the amount of \$45,000.00, pending verification with the Town's Accounting Firm. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0.

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION offered by Mrs. Parnell and seconded by Mr. Gates to adjourn the Town Board Meeting until June 25<sup>th</sup>. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0.

Town Board Meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine M. Harris, Clerk