

Town of Red Hook

TOWN BOARD MINUTES

Volume VI RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION

1958 - June 3, 1964

Volume VI of the Town Board minutes is post bound with a leatherette binding in fair - good condition. There are 284 pages of records and no index. The first pages were not numbered and pencilled numbers i - iv were added for microfilming; the remaining pages have printed numbers.

The records are in fair to good condition. There is yellowing and browning of the paper, particularly where news clippings have been inserted. Some pages have been torn and some have taped repairs.

Entries are handwritten, with variations in ink; smudges and stains are common. There are many corrections, either cross-outs or ink erase. Ink and corrections have sometimes bled through the paper, causing parts of the record to be barely legible.

There are many inserts, some glued into the book, and some loose. They include typewritten, handwritten, photocopy or carbon copy documents or notes. Pencilled numbers were added to the inserts for the purpose of microfilming and to prevent loss of order should they become separated from the record. Volume VI apparently has been disbound at some time, as some of the loose inserts have punch holes made for the book.

The inserts were added as a response to the increasing demands of recording Town business. Many are mentioned in the body of the minutes as being attached and forming a part thereof. Notation has been made in cases where attachments were mentioned in the minutes, but not found. Some inserts were found in locations not appropriate for their information; they were relocated to the most appropriate location, with a pencilled notation of where they were originally found. Some inserts are not mentioned in the minutes; they may have been included for information, as a convenient means of filing, or they may be notes. They were included in the microfilming whether they were necessary to the minutes or not, as they reflect the manner in which the records were kept.

The condition of the inserts is poor to good. Many have been folded, tattered and have frayed edges. Some have been torn and taped. Information contained in the inserts includes

bids, contracts, petitions, reports, public notices, budgets, ordinances and miscellaneous correspondence.

STRUCTURE:

Regular Town Board meetings continued to be held monthly, with special meetings held as needed (many for public hearings). Some special meetings occurred on a regular basis. The first meeting of the year was for reorganization, at which time the Town Board set salaries, made appointments, designated the official bank and newspaper, and approved bonds of officials. An end-of-the-year meeting was held to approve the Supervisor's annual report, with details of accounts.

The structure of the minutes remains basically the same as established in the early 1900's - regular or special meeting, date, time, location (Town Clerk's Office until 1962, then Town Administration building), Town officials present, minutes of last meeting read for information, Supervisor's monthly report approved, bills audited and paid (generally listed only by abstract number), other business, discussion or presentations, approval of minutes, adjournment, signature of Town officials. Public hearings would be included at whatever point their scheduled time occurred.

There was so much business for the Town Clerk to record, that apparently standard sections and known information (bills to be paid) were pre-recorded. Evidence of this fact can be seen where there are crossed out entries or Town officials are listed as present, with absent following some names. Also, some sections will have recordings in two different inks.

The content of Volume VI of the Town Board minutes shows changing responsibilities of the Town Board. Public hearings are a routine matter for highway equipment purchases and budgets. Motions are recorded by name of maker and second; sometimes roll call votes are recorded.

CONTENT:

Discussion of issues begins to be recorded after 1960, as issues become more complicated and controversial. More personal and historical notes are included, such as memorials to deceased Town officials (also President Kennedy), appreciation of committee work and recognition of Loyalty Day queens.

DOG CONTROL: The Town appoints and pays a Dog Control Officer; it hears a complaint about the Dog Warden.

ELECTIONS: Election responsibilities continue to include designating polling places, appointing and paying election inspectors (2 Republican, 2 Democratic and alternates for each of 6 election districts) and acting as a Board of Canvassers for general elections, for which candidates and their total votes are recorded.

HIGHWAYS: Highway matters continue to be a large part of Town business. Bids for purchases of equipment and materials are approved (details). In 1959, a resolution is made increasing the limit for purchases and repair of highway equipment to \$50,000.

Highway employees and their wages are listed, usually in January.

Many new roads are accepted as town roads, though descriptions are not included. By 1961, performance bonds are required to assure completion of roads to Town specifications.

Speed limits are a concern, as the Town Board hears petitions to reduce them.

SCHOOLS/PUBLIC EDUCATION: The Town Board has no responsibilities for schools, though it does make a cooperative agreement to loan equipment and highway employees for construction of playgrounds and roads.

The Town continues to grant funds to public libraries.

PUBLIC SAFETY: In 1960, the Town Board passes a resolution to prevent Constables from unauthorized acts of law enforcement.

Yearly contracts with Fire Companies and Fire Police are approved.

Additional street lighting and the formation of 3 new Lighting Districts, Linden Acres, Willow Park and Bard College are approved. Petitions and descriptions are included.

In 1962, the Town Board appoints a Director and deputy for Civil Defense.

COURTS: Jury lists are no longer recorded.

TAXATION: No taxation issues are recorded.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY: The Supervisor, Justices of the Peace and Town Clerk give annual fiscal reports (details included for Supervisor's).

BUDGET: The budget process continues as established previously, with approval of preliminary budget, public hearing and adoption of final budget occurring in October. Budgets are attached to the minutes.

TOWN HALL: To accomodate the needs of the Highway Department and other Town offices, the Town Board purchases property in 1960 (site of present Town buildings).

PERSONNEL: To address increased administrative demands, the Town establishes the position of Deputy Supervisor. Deputies are also appointed and paid for the Town Clerk and Registrar.

Highway employees are granted paid vacation.

PURCHASING: Bidding procedure begins to be reflected in the minutes with details of purchases of highway equipment and materials.

PLANNING AND ZONING: Planning is addressed as a separate issue, as the Town Board appoints a Planning Board in 1962. Industry becomes a concern of the Town Board, and it appoints an Industrial Development Committee in 1962. Zoning has not been reconsidered since a previous defeat of a proposed zoning ordinance, though restrictions on trailer parks are an issue.

PUBLIC RECREATION: Recreation increases as a Town responsibility; the Town appoints a joint Recreation Committee with the Villages in 1958. In 1960, a Recreation Park Committee submits a 6 year park development program, with a first recommendation of obtaining a low cost swimming facility. The Town approves purchase of property in 1961, but is petitioned for a referendum vote on the purchase (no further mention). By 1962, the Town Recreation Commission operates summer youth recreation programs (jointly with the Villages by 1963).

WATER SUPPLY: The Town Board begins to deal with water supply issues. It holds a public hearing and grants approval for the incorporation of the Annandale Water Works in 1958.

SOLID WASTE: Solid waste issues become an important item of business, as the Town attempts to control and license refuse and garbage dumps, remove junk cars, and locate a site for a Town dump. In 1962, The Town adopts an ordinance to regulate refuse and garbage dumps, and appoints the Dutchess County Health Department inspector for the program in 1963. The issue prompts much discussion (not all detailed) and several resolutions.

The issues brought before the Town Board and recorded in Volume VI of the minutes show the concerns of residents and the increased demand for the Town to address them. Petitions and public hearings reflect greater public participation in the Town government. Interaction with other agencies and local governments continues to grow. Other historical information has decreased, as lists of claimants for bills and lists of jurors are no longer included.

END VOLUME VI RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION