

Town of Red Hook

TOWN BOARD MINUTES

Volume VII RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION

July 1, 1964 - 1969

Volume VII of the Town Board minutes is post bound with a leatherette binding in fair condition. There are 261 pages of records in fair to good condition; some pages have tattered edges. Numbers are printed, and run from 283 - 298, then from 1 - 298, with pages 246 - 298 blank. There is no index.

Entries are handwritten, with variations in ink. There are some stains and smudges. Sometimes ink has bled through the paper. Corrections are common. These conditions have made some areas barely legible. Misspellings are very common.

Included with the minutes are many loose inserts. They are in fair to good condition; some have been torn and taped. Inserts are usually typed, but may be carbons or photocopies. Pencilled numbers have been added to the inserts for purposes of microfilming and to prevent loss of order should they become separated from the volume.

Some inserts were not found in their appropriate location in the minutes; where possible, they were put in the proper location, with a notation of where they were found. Some duplicates have been removed. Many of the inserts were not necessary to the minutes, but have been included to show how the record was kept at the time. There are also many instances where records are noted as attached or filed with the minutes, but not found with the minutes. The types of documents included as inserts are ordinances, resolutions, bids, contracts, budgets and correspondence.

The structure of the Town Board minutes has remained the same as established in the early 1900's. Regular meetings were held monthly (second Wednesday, changed to second Tuesday in 1968), with special meetings held as needed. The Town Clerk apparently pre-recorded standard parts of the meeting, as can sometimes be seen when Town Board members are listed as present, with a notation of absent by their name. Special or regular meeting was noted, along with the date, time and place (Town Administration building). Town officials present were listed. Minutes of the previous meeting were read for information, or sometimes approved. The Supervisor's monthly report was

read and approved. Bills were read, audited and ordered paid (now only by abstract number and amount). Other business was discussed and resolved by motion, or tabled for more information. Public hearings or other presentations were held; their placement would depend upon the particular time for which they were scheduled. Minutes of the meeting were generally read and approved, followed by adjournment and signatures of Town officials.

The first meeting of the year continued as a reorganization meeting, at which the Town Board set salaries, vacation and sick leave, made appointments, designated the official bank and newspaper/s, and assigned responsibilities to Town Board members. The list of Committees appointed included Town Recreation, Civil Defence, Industrial Development, and Planning Board. The year end meeting was held for approval of reports of the Supervisor, Town Clerk, Justices of the Peace and Tax Collector (details of accounts or total receipts and disbursements included).

There are more details of business brought before the Town Board. Attendees for presentations or requests are named. Issues are increasingly referred to a Town Attorney for opinions before approval.

CONTENT:

ANIMAL CONTROL: The Dog Warden requests a tranquillizer gun, and resigns when it is denied.

ELECTIONS: The Town Board meets annually as a Board of Canvassers to certify the results of general elections, listing candidates and votes. The Town Board designates polling places and appoints inspectors of elections.

HIGHWAYS: Highway matters remain a major issue of Town business, as they have been since the Town was formed. Maintenance and safety are the main responsibilities at this time. There is increased recording of bids for highway materials and fuel oil. Bonds to assure construction of roads to Town specifications are routine; the Town Board accepts several new roads.

As the County and State have responsibility for many roads, complaints and requests for improvements and speed limits are referred through the Town Board to those agencies. The issue of the condition of State Route 96 extends from 1965 - 1967. the Town approves yearly contracts with the County for snow and ice removal.

Littering and dumping on the highways becomes an issue, as does parking on Town roads during snow removal. The Town Highway Department is requested to provide men and equipment for use by the Villages.

EDUCATION: the Town Board continues to approve contracts with the public libraries.

PUBLIC SAFETY: The Town Board approves contracts with the Fire Companies.

Civil Defense is a minor issue, though the Town Board responds negatively. There is a listing of fallout shelter locations.

Additional street lights are approved.

The Town Board addresses a complaint of hazardous conditions of two properties in Tivoli.

TAXATION: the Town Board grants the Villages exemptions from certain highway costs.

Senior citizens' tax exemptions are discussed and granted after public hearing (1967).

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY: Annual reports are included for the Supervisor (details of accounts), as well as the Town Clerk, Justices of the Peace and Tax Collector (details of receipts and disbursements).

PUBLIC HEALTH: Public health issues include requests for mosquito control and littering complaints. The Town Board approves the formation of a sewer district at Bard College in 1968.

FRANCHISES: The Town Board hears presentations of cable television companies.

BUDGET: The budget process continues as before, though in this time period, the preliminary budget is adopted in October, and the public hearing and adoption of the final budget occur in November. The record notes that the preliminary budget is filed with the Town Clerk and made a part of the minutes; it is no longer included in the minutes. The record notes that the final budget shall be entered in detail in the minutes, though in most cases, it was not.

PERSONNEL: Personnel and payroll needs grow with Town responsibilities. The Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to hire a bookkeeper in 1966.

Setting salaries for Town officials and employees has been a routine function of the Town Board; the Board is now setting paid vacation and sick leave. Social Security coverage of Town Board members is approved (1964). The Town Board agrees to pay full hospitalization insurance costs

for Town employees (1966), and passes a resolution to join the New York State employees retirement system (1967).

INSURANCE: There is mention of a presentation on insurance and resolutions regarding health and liability insurance coverage.

RECREATION: Public recreation continues as a Town responsibility. The Town Board approves and funds joint Town/Village youth recreation projects and receives reports on them (some detail).

PURCHASING: Bidding procedure for materials and equipment purchased by the Town are well established, with public hearings held for major purchases. Bids for materials and equipment occur frequently, and are often included in the minutes for this time period.

ZONING AND PLANNING: Planning and zoning issues become a major part of Town business. In 1964, the Town Board approves plans for an airport (Skypark), subject to County Planning Department and Town Planning Board reports.

The Town Board directs the Planning Board to study subdivision plans (1964), and it authorizes the Planning Board to review and approve subdivisions (1965).

The Planning Board draws up an ordinance regulating trailers or mobile homes, which is approved in 1969. Residents object to the ordinance at a public hearing, and the ordinance is referred to the Town Attorney.

ZONING: After much discussion and a public hearing, Town Junkyard Ordinance is enacted in 1966; the Town Board further arranges to have junk cars removed and issues notices of violation. There is discussion of siting a Town landfill, and residents petition against the approval of a permit for a private refuse dump.

The Town Board appoints a Zoning Commission to study and make recommendations for a Zoning Law. A Committee of Citizens and Taxpayers petitions for action on a zoning ordinance.

ENVIRONMENT: Environmental issues are recognized, as the Town Board appoints a Conservation Advisory Council in 1969.

Volume VII of the Town Board minutes reflects increased public participation in the Town government business, as more complaints and requests are brought to the Town Board. More discussion of issues is recorded in the minutes, though not always detailed. Important matters are decided by roll call votes. Issues are carried over a period of time, not decided in one meeting, and are increasingly referred to the Town Attorney for legal opinions. Increased interaction with State and County agencies is reflected.

END VOLUME VII RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION