

Town of Red Hook

TOWN BOARD MINUTES

Volume X RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION

1978 - August 5, 1982

Volume X of the Town Board minutes is post bound with leatherette binding in good condition, but scuffed. It has a typewritten index in the beginning, with headings A - Z, including Mc. There are no entries for letter Q. Entries were made by subject, Department/Committee or person's name (first letter of last name), but are not necessarily cross-indexed. Some examples: authentic signatures are indexed under A; sealed bids, highway are indexed under S; bids, highway are indexed under B.

There are 302 pages of records with printed numbers (pages 301/302 in pencil). They are in very good condition, with minor staining. Entries are typewritten; in some areas, particularly the beginning, there is blurring and faintness caused by the typewriter ribbon. There are some corrections.

Many inserts are included in the volume, usually punched in, but some loose, and a few glued. They are generally photocopies of typewritten documents, including ordinances, legal notices and correspondence. They are in good condition, with minor tears and crumpling. Pencilled numbers were added to the inserts for the purpose of microfilming, and to prevent loss of order. Some of the inserts are mentioned as attached, but some are not. In some cases, inserts were relocated to an area more appropriate to their content, with notation of where they were found.

STRUCTURE:

The structure of the minutes has changed slightly. Regular meetings were still held monthly, on the second Tuesday, with special meetings held as needed. Town Board members met prior to the official opening of the meeting to sign vouchers; in 1980, this activity was moved to the end of the meeting, an indication that the procedure has now become so lengthy as to interfere with the business of the meeting. Whether the meeting is regular or special is noted, followed by the date and location, which in this time period varied from the Town Hall or Annex to Village Halls to the High School. The time of opening the meeting was recorded; meetings were opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes of the last meeting/s were read

and approved, with corrections detailed. The Supervisor's monthly report was read and approved. Correspondence was read and discussed. Appointments were made. Business brought before the meeting was discussed and either referred to other agencies, tabled for more information, or decided upon. At the end of the meeting, bills were audited and paid by abstract and fund number. The time of adjournment was recorded, followed by the signatures of Town officials.

Public hearings and information meetings are routine, as are yearly reorganizational meetings and year end meetings. It is now common for much of the business to be in the form of reports by agencies or departments responsible for the area of the business, i.e. Highway, Zoning, Planning. When public hearings are held, they occur at a specific time; occasionally the meeting will adjourn for the hearing, and resume following it. Resolutions are noted by name of maker and second, and occasionally decided by roll call vote.

Details of discussions have increased in the Town Board minutes. Names and sometimes addresses of attending residents are given, along with opinions or requests that they expressed. Questions and answers are recorded. More personal details and feelings are included- memorials to deceased officials, recognitions, congratulations and thanks. Proclamations are made, i.e. regarding the hostages in Iran and Preservation Week.

The structure of the Town Board and Committees increases. More deputies and secretaries are added. In 1978, Town Committees included Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Advisory Council, Recreation Commission, Senior Citizens, Steering Committee, Planning Board, Visual Environment Committee, Recreation Park Commission, Assessment Review Board, Board of Ethics and Industrial and Commercial Incentive Board. In the same year, a Zoning Commission and Hudson River Shorelands Task Force were added. At the reorganization meeting held in the beginning of each year, Committees and all their members are listed, with expiration dates of members' terms.

Public participation in Town decisions increases, and is encouraged. All but the most routine decisions are deferred until public input has been heard through public hearings or informational meetings, and recommendations have been made by relevant Committees, agencies or consultants. This process increases the time required to make a decision.

CONTENTS:

DOG CONTROL: Usually a minor item of Town Board business,

dog control receives greater attention. The Town Board approves an increase in dog license fees. A new State Dog Control Law makes the Town responsible for dogs in the Villages. The Dog Warden suggests that the Town build kennels for holding impounded dogs.

ELECTIONS: Elections responsibilities of the Town Board are now reduced to appointing and approving payment for inspectors of elections and voting machine custodians, as well as the purchase and use of voting machines.

HIGHWAYS: Highway business continues to be primarily the maintenance of roads, including purchases of equipment and materials. The Highway Department has increased involvement with County, State and Federal programs. The Town Board approves a radio leasing system.

Safety of roads is a continuing issue, as there are speeding complaints, resolutions setting speed limits, a request to close the Barrytown railroad crossing (approved) and a request to close Annandale Road at Bard College (denied).

PUBLIC WELFARE: In 1980, the Dutchess County Community Action Agency explains its programs for the needy and asks for financial support from the Town, a responsibility not handled by the Town since the abolishment of the office of the Overseers of the Poor.

PUBLIC SAFETY: In addition to the continuing issue of highway safety, the Town Board deals with complaints of vandalism, theft of road signs, calls for increased police protection and street lighting. A Swimming Pool Ordinance adopted in 1975 is reconsidered and revised to require fencing of new pools, with encouragement of fencing of pre-existing pools.

COURTS: Business of the Town Court is not often a part of Town Board business. In this time period, however, the Justices of the Peace request additional court space and ask for Town Board assistance with their complaint of the cost of the State Stop DWI program.

TAXATION AND ASSESSMENT: The business of taxation and assessment includes the issue of equalization rates (set by the State) and a proposal to establish a single County Assessor, which the Town Board opposes. Senior citizens' tax exemptions are increased.

State purchase of Tivoli Bays and Cruger Island brings concern about lost taxes and support of legislation to require the State to pay taxes on State properties. Tax exempt status of the Unification Church becomes an issue. Computerization of assessment records is completed.

FISCAL/PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY: Annual reports are no longer detailed; Supervisor's monthly fiscal reports are.

PUBLIC HEALTH: Concerns about a septage disposal site and the County proposal to site an ashfill/landfill are discussed.

BUDGET: Details of the budget process receive less mention in the minutes, except for items of increase and tax rates, and budgets are not included. Federal revenue sharing is discussed and subject to public hearing, generally being applied to tax reduction.

Budget adjustments, rather than transfers of funds, are common.

PERSONNEL: The Town Board sets salaries and benefits of employees. Full disability is added for full time employees. Appointments and salaries are listed at the reorganization meeting at the beginning of the year.

TOWN HALL: Increased need for space generates discussion which results in renovations to the Town Hall and rental of a Town Hall Annex.

PUBLIC RECREATION: In 1978, the Town Board reapplies for a State Department of Parks and Recreation grant, and hires a consultant to survey and design a development program for the Town Recreation Park. There are reports and bids for the development program. Phase 2, Recreation Park Development Program is completed in 1981.

The Town Board deals with conflicts of the use (abuse) of the Recreation Park with neighboring properties. It also has the business of awarding bids for a food concession at the park.

Joint Town/Village Youth Activity programs continue to be approved and funded. In 1981, a joint Town/Village Adult Recreation program is added.

PLANNING: A major issue involving the Town Board and Planning Board is the proposal by Consolidated Edison Company to site a power plant on lands in the Towns of Red Hook and Clermont. While the Steering Committee has been delegated to study and make recommendations on the proposal, the Town Board holds informational meetings for the public (with the Steering Committee and Consolidated Edison). As recommended by the Steering Committee and Planning Board, the Town Board adopts Local Law #2 of 1978, a Power Plant Site Study Law, to authorize the Planning Board to review site plans for the power plant and charge fees for such review. Court challenge of the law requires

the Town to hire outside legal help.

Planning issues are involved in many other areas of Town business - zoning, environment, water supply. These other areas take prominence in this time period. The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals request a moratorium on development approvals pending a review of zoning, but the Town Board defers action.

ZONING AND ZONING ENFORCEMENT: Rezoning requests continue. In 1978, the Town Board appoints a Zoning Commission to review the Zoning Law. After reports and recommendations by the Zoning Commission, the the Town Board holds public hearings on proposed revisions to the zoning law, continuing through 1982.

The Town Board appoints the Zoning Enforcement Officer as Fire Inspector to enforce the State Fire Code (1982), and approves a fee schedule for the ZEO. The Town Board mediates a dispute between the Zoning Board of Appeals and an applicant.

WATER SUPPLY: A major item of Town Board business is acceptancing responsibility for water supply, as the Board is put in the position of either purchasing Annandale Water Works or dealing with the abandonment of the private company. The Town Board appoints the Annandale Water Works Study Group to investigate options in 1979. The Study Group is replaced by a Water Commission in 1980. Further reports, a public hearing, recommendations and engineering studies are heard.

The Town Board seeks to establish a new water supply before approving the formation of a water district. It appoints a Water District Advisory Committee in 1981; resulting recommendations develop a two year timetable for the formation of a water district. The Supervisor is authorized to sign a contract for the purchase of the Annandale Water Works.

ENVIRONMENT: Many environmental issues are brought before the Town Board. Power plant and landfill siting proposals, mentioned previously, have continued to be an issue of many discussions.

The Town Board receives recommendations and considers adoption of a Freshwater Wetlands Law. It adopts a Wetlands law, and advises the Town Attorney to file, even though it can not be implemented without wetlands maps from the State.

There is discussion of 765 kv power lines and their impacts.

After recommendations by the Conservation Advisory Council, the Town Board approves implementation of the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Concern over the environmental effect of high pressure sodium lights is referred to the Visual environment Committee for recommendations.

Concerns about the environmental and public health impacts of an operating septage disposal site are discussed, involving the Dutchess County Planning Department and Dutchess County Health Department.

The Town Board approves the State proposal to designate a 20 mile Scenic and Historic District along the Hudson River.

The Conservation Advisory Council presents a Natural Resources Inventory. In 1982, the CAC proposes establishment of a Recycling Center on Town property; the Town Board approves.

In 1980, Department of Environmental Conservation representatives meet with the Town Board to discuss the State purchase of Tivoli Bays and Cruger Island, and the plans for their use.

SOLID WASTE: The Town Board hears discussion of the County plans for garbage to steam plant; in 1982, the Town Board approves the Dutchess County Solid Waste Disposal Program.

HANDICAPPED: Consideration of the handicapped becomes Town business. The Town Clerk issues handicapped permits. The Town Board designates handicapped parking space at the Town Hall, though the Town Hall and Town Hall Annex are not handicapped accessible.

Increased discussion and public participation, greater influence of Federal, State and County programs, and increased use of consultants and engineers- all are reflected in Volume X of the Town Board minutes as a result of the greater demands placed upon the Town for services and solutions to public complaints. Issues now require coordination of effort among various Town Departments and Committees, and with outside agencies as well.

END VOLUME X RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION