
RICHFORD QUARTERLY

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FROM THE SUPERVISOR

The Town has survived two flash floods this past summer. Several drainage pipes on Town roads had to be replaced. The Potato Festival was another successful community event. Residents are reminded that dogs need to be licensed and vaccinated against rabies; the Dog Control Officer will be conducting a dog enumeration in the future. I am beginning work on next year's Town budget. Some Town equipment may need to be replaced next year. Residents are reminded to apply for the STAR property tax exemption before December 31.

ELECTION DAY

Election Day is Tuesday, November 5, from 6 am to 9 pm at the Richford Town Hall, Bowery Lane. Three candidates are running for two four-year terms on the Town Board, and two candidates are running for Highway Supervisor. Candidates and offices they are campaigning for are:

Town Of Richford Offices

Supervisor: 2 year term

Martin S. Wilcox (D) (unopposed)

Town Clerk: two year term

Judith A; Thurston (R) (unopposed)

Councilman: 4 year term, Vote for any two

Beverly Brown (D)

Ken Miller (R)

Roberta Holcomb (R)

Superintendent of Highways: Vote for one

Michael L. Holt Sr. (R)

Michael F. Hunt

County Offices

District Attorney: Vote for one

Fred Luther (D)

Kirk Martin (R)

Absentee Ballots can be obtained from the Board of Elections located in the County Office Building, 56 Main St., Owego, NY. Phone (607) 687-8261.

The Planning Board asked all candidates for the Town Board and Highway Superintendent positions to describe their qualifications, goals, and how they would protect the Town from impacts of hydraulic fracturing. Their responses are printed verbatim below (in alphabetical order). Longer versions of these statements are available on the Town website www.richfordny.com. One candidate did not respond.

CANDIDATES FOR TOWN BOARD

Name: Roberta Holcomb - R

Occupation:

Qualifications (experience, education and training):

I have been a resident of Richford for 22 years during my youth and moved back to Richford in 2008. At this time I am fully employed in corporate America working for AT&T. During my 30 years working for AT&T I have an Operations and Engineering background and currently work in New Technology Development at AT&T Labs. I also currently work in Agriculture, farming organic vegetables and working with family members raising horses and beef. I served 6 years in the US Navy as a Radioman and previously ran my own small business in PA for 12 years, Morning Glories, a Bed and Breakfast. Served on the Board of Directors of Hilltop Village Association in Beach Lake, PA. for 12 or more years. I held the office of Vice President and of President of the Association and was responsible to the villagers for maintenance and repair of the village roads and water (well) system for the private community of about 40 homes. Serve as Richford Fire Commissioner since 2009

Name: Ken Miller - R

Mr. Miller prepared a lengthy statement that is available on the Town website: www.richfordny.com.

CANDIDATES FOR HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Name: Michael L Holt Sr

Occupation: Highway Superintendent for Town of Richford

Qualifications (experience, education and training): Came to work for Town in 2000. Took over Highway Superintendent in 2009. Nov 16 Newark Valley Central took training at Cornell School for 3 years. Training for Tioga Soil and Water. Been to Albany Highway School for 2 years.

Goals while in office: Will be doing same thing I have done for 4 years looking out for tax payers. Try to keep taxes down. Do the best job I can do for town and be there on full time as I have been for four years. Try to keep best roads I can for residents and buses in winter months. Purchase parts and supplies best price I can find. It's not up to me to decide on fracking. It will be up to me to take care of roads for tax payers when it happens.

Name: Michael F. Hunt
Occupation: Self-employed; Construction and Excavation
Qualifications (experience, education and training):

From 1987 -1995 I worked for the town of Berkshire highway department. From 1993 to present, I have owned and operated Hunt Excavation and Construction. I have also attended the Annual School for Highway Superintendents.

Goals while in office:

All Richford highways will be built, maintained and/or repaired with the highest integrity and the least inconvenience to the residents. I will see to it that the costs are kept to a minimum without sacrificing the quality of work to be completed. I will supervise the department personnel to achieve top quality workmanship along with employee job satisfaction and high moral. Although hydraulic fracturing is not an issue for the State of New York at this time, if and when it does become a consideration, I will interpret and comply with all State and Federal regulations to ensure that our towns highways suffer minimally if at all.

Other information:

I am running for Town of Richford Highway Superintendent on a write in vote.

TOWN BOARD NEWS

July 9, 2013 - Highway Superintendent Holt reported that the Barden Road project is on schedule and will take two to three weeks to complete. Guide rails are to be installed on July 27th. The Town's old pickup truck has been sold. It was decided due to dollar costs to rent a tamper for use on the Barden Road project instead of purchasing one.

The Justice Court report for June 2013 was presented; \$1275 collected in fines. The Code Enforcement and Dog Control reports for June 2013 were presented, also a dog control report for March 2013.

There was discussion about a town-wide dog enumeration. Ron Raab, Dog Control officer, would charge \$1.50 per dog found. The Board voted to conduct a town-wide dog enumeration.

A Planning Board report for June 2013 was given by Charlie Davis. The Planning Board has spent 2 years working on a Road Use Protection Law and Road Agreement. Both laws require significant engineering and legal expertise that is outside the scope of the Planning Board, and the Planning Board recommended that the Town Board hire professional expertise to prepare these laws. Davis stated that Delta Engineering would provide a Road Protection Law, Road Use Agreement, and determine current road conditions for approximately \$10,000, and less if adjacent Towns also contracted with Delta Engineering.

The Board thanked the Fire Department, Highway Department and the Berkshire Emergency Squad for their assistance during the July 2, 2013, flooding. They also thanked Tina Thurston for all her assistance during the Town Clerk's illness.

David Perry, on behalf of the Highway Employees, asked the Board if any action had been taken on the proposed changes to the expiring contract. Mr. Perry was informed that the Board has been working on the contract and hopes to have some comments ready for the employees to discuss.

Richard Harrington reported that REAP plans to stay active using volunteers until possibly January 2014. William Stell asked the Town Board to reimburse Highway Superintendent Holt for the use of his personal trailer, etc. for the road/bridge work being done on Barden Road.

Dore Karasin again addressed the Board regarding Michaud Road, and there was much discussion. Supervisor Wilcox stated that the Town will plow Michaud Road under normal circumstances but not if plowing would put anyone in peril.

August 13, 2013 - Highway Superintendent Holt gave a report for July 2013. The severe storm and flood on August 8 caused considerable road damage (especially Tubbs Hill Rd). Work will begin next week to repair Rawley Park. Work continues on Barden Road.

The Justice Court report for July 2013 indicated \$3170 collected in fines. The Code Enforcement report and Planning Board reports for July 2013 were presented.

The Board approved removal of the two trees in front of the Town Hall at a cost of \$2800. There was further discussion about the letter from Dore Karasin regarding Michaud Road. The Board overturned their earlier decision to do any work on or extend the Town's ownership of Michaud Rd past the current existing maintained right-of-way; beyond that point is private property.

Supervisor Wilcox led the discussion of the assessment case at 21 Victory Hill Road that had been before the NYS Land Property Tax judge and his ruling on the case. The Board agreed to new figures of \$47,000 and \$228,000 for the vacant land.

The Historical Society addressed the Board regarding the painting of the outside of the Graded School. Frances Butler was reappointed for a 6 year term as Town Assessor.

September 17, 2013 - Deputy Highway Superintendent Perry reported that the repair work on Tubbs Hill Road is almost complete and the Belden Ryan Road drainage pipe is being worked on. The Highway Department will assess the tree at the Graded School that has branches hanging over the adjacent property.

The Justice Court report for August 2013 was presented; \$1195 was collected in fines. The Code Enforcement, Dog Control, and Planning Board reports for August 2013 were presented. Ron Raab, Dog Control Officer, discussed how he would handle a dog enumeration. John Schwartz and his wife gave a presentation on NTNN (Neighbors helping Neighbors).

The highway employee's contract was discussed. Supervisor Wiicox stated that he had given the Highway Employees a new contract to peruse but had not heard any comment, David Perry, representing the highway employees, said that they had received the proposed contract changes but the employees would like to discuss the matter face to face with the Town Board. Such a meeting will be held next week.

There was discussion regarding the burned house located on Route 79. Supervisor Wilcox said he had tried to email the town's attorney but has had no response to date. Supervisor Wilcox stated he had received information for the Town to apply for HUD money, if interested.

COMMUNITY AUXILIARY

The Community Auxiliary is holding its annual Halloween Party at the Community Hall in Richford on October 26th, from 2pm-6pm. There will be refreshments, games, music and pumpkin paintings. This party is open to all.

On December 21 Santa Claus will come to town from 2pm-4pm. This is open to Richford Kids only. If you have any questions or would like to join this community group, call Christina Craft (844-8969).

BERKSHIRE FREE LIBRARY NEWS

Pre-school Story Time for ages 2 to 5 and their parents and/or caregivers has returned on Tuesdays, 10 – 11 am at the library, Route 38 at the corner of Jewett Hill Rd. The free program includes stories, songs, games, and crafts.

This program may also be offered in Richford at the Hubbard Center – contact Library Director LuAnn Whirl (657-4418) and let her know the best day for your family.

BERKSIRE FREE LIBRARY FUNDRAISING

Please watch for this year's fundraising letter. It is being sent as a single page without envelopes this year to save on expenses. Trustees of the Berkshire Free Library hope that you will again make a donation toward the operating expenses of the library.

TIOGA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Museum is beginning work on its annual O'Tannenbaum Holiday Showcase and Fundraiser. Individuals, businesses and organizations are given artificial trees free of charge by the museum which they then decorate and return to the museum. The museum then sells the trees at silent auction to raise funds for next year. The event runs Nov. 9 – Dec. 14. This year's theme is "A Victorian Christmas"; there will be special musical events and visits by Santa. The museum is located at 110 Front St. in Owego and is open Wed.-Sat. 10 am-4 pm.

DOG CENSUS

The Town Board authorized the Town dog control officer to conduct a Town wide dog enumeration (dog census). As per New York State and Town of Richford, NY law, all dogs over the age of 4 months must be licensed. Now is the time to get your dog(s) licensed to avoid any late fees, enumeration fees or citations.

You can license your dog(s) during regular Town Clerk hours, Tue. Wed, & Thur. 7-9 pm. Use the application form available at the Town Clerk's office, or go to the Town website at <http://www.richfordny.com/townclerk.html> to fill out the form on-line. The forms as a .pdf to print and then fill out by hand, and also as an editable .xls, that allows you to download, fill in the blanks and print/save to your computer so you can simply update your application yearly to mail or drop off at the Town Clerk's office.

Remember to bring a current copy of each dog's proof of rabies vaccination, and if your dog has been spayed or neutered, you must also submit proof from your veterinarian.

KEEP YOUR STAR REBATE

New legislation requires all homeowners receiving a Basic STAR exemption to register with the New York State Tax Department in order to receive STAR exemptions in 2014 and subsequent years. The Basic STAR exempts the first \$30,000 of the full value of a home from school taxes and is available to homeowners who earn less than \$500,000 a year.

If you are currently receiving the Basic STAR exemption, you should receive a letter containing your STAR Code. Follow the directions in your letter to register on-line at <http://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star13/> or by calling (518) 457-2036.

If you have not received your STAR Code, then you must register with the Tax Department to continue receiving the exemption in 2014 and forward. If you have internet access go to www.tax.ny.gov; select "Register for STAR", and then select "Star Code Lookup". If you do not have internet access, or have questions, call 518-457-2036.

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Calendar of Events

- Oct 26 Chicken barbeque Fire Dept. 11 am till done. Half \$6, dinner \$8
- Oct 26 Halloween Party. 2-6 pm, Town Hall. Sponsored by Community Auxiliary, open to all
- Oct 31 Last day to sign up for Christmas gifts, Tioga County Rural Ministry, 143 North Ave, Owego
- Nov 4 Last day to apply in person at the board of elections for an absentee ballot
- Nov 5 Election Day. Polls open from 6 am until 9 pm, Town Hall, Bowery Ln
- Nov 7 Food giveaway 12 noon Richford Congregational Church, bring boxes or bags.

- Nov 7 Public hearing on proposed 2014 budget 7:30 p.m., Town Hall
- Nov 9 Last day to sign up for Thanksgiving food baskets, Helping Hands Food Pantry, call 657-8158 or 6572501
- Nov 23 Pick up day for Thanksgiving food baskets, Berkshire Community Center, 11 Jewett Hill Road
- Dec 5 Food give away see Nov 7
- Dec 10 Election of fire commissioner, 6-9 pm, Fire House, Bowery Lane, Richford.
- Dec 14 Pickup day for Christmas food baskets.
- Dec 21 Santa Claus visits Richford. 2-4 pm, Town Hall. Sponsored by Community Auxiliary, open to Richford children only.
- Jan 2 Food giveaway, see Nov 7

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Families and individuals with low or moderate income levels can sign up for Christmas gifts for their children, ages 0 – 18, at the Tioga County Rural Ministry, 143 North Avenue, Owego. The office is open 10 am – 4 pm, Monday - Thursday and 10 am – 1 pm on Friday. Telephone 687-3021. Deadline for requests is October 31.

HOLIDAY FOOD BASKET

Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets will be available again this year from the Helping Hands Food Pantry for residents of Richford, Berkshire and Speedsville. Call Joan at 657-2501 or Emily at 657-8158 by Saturday, November 9 to sign up for one or both baskets. The Thanksgiving baskets will be available on November 23; the Christmas baskets on December 14. Each person will be assigned a pickup time to ease parking congestion.