

March 17, 2015

The regular Town Board meeting of the Town of Stony Creek was held on March 17, 2015. Supervisor Frank Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM with members present:

Councilman Nathan Thomas
Councilwoman Doreen Ryan
Councilman John Thomas
Attorney James Cooper
Absent: Councilman Carl Thomas

February 17, 2015 minutes; correction:

Page 01 change obsolete too absolutely

A motion was made by Councilman Nathan Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan to accept the February 17, 2015 minutes with this correction. All in favor, motion carried.

056-15. A resolution was made by Councilwoman Ryan seconded by Councilman John Thomas to pay the General Fund bills in the amount of \$9145.09. Roll call vote, all in favor.

057-15. A resolution was made by Councilman Nathan Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan to pay the Highway Fund bills in the amount of \$55,309.70. Roll call vote, all in favor.

Town Clerk report:

Fax	\$ 4.00
Dog licenses	<u>70.00</u>
Total Town Revenues to Supervisor	\$74.00
NYS Ag & Markets	<u>14.00</u>
Total disbursed	\$88.00

Correspondence:

Dog Control Log- February 2015.

Cassandra Bennett- permission to use the town hall April 18, 2015 for a Party.

Tammy Bruns- permission to use the Rec. Field on June 20, 2015 for a 50th Anniversary Party.

Stony Creek Free Library- permission to use the town hall May 15th, 2015 for a Photo Slideshow of the Adirondacks with music by Adirondack Hiker Peter Fedorick, also permission to hold the food concession and 50/50 at the 2015 Summer Concert Series "Music in the Park" at the Rec. Field.

Stony Creek Chamber of Commerce Mountain Days Committee- permission to reserve the park/pavilion for the Mountain Days Festival August 7th-9th, 2015

Brett Benansky- Notice of Claim received March 5, 2015.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Ryan seconded by Councilman Nathan Thomas Authorizing the Stony Creek Free Library use of the town hall May 15th, 2015 (if needed) for a Photo Slideshow of the Adirondacks with music by Adirondack Hiker Peter Fedorick also permission to hold the food concession and 50/50 at the 2015 Summer Concert Series “Music in the Park” at the Rec. Field. All in favor, motion carried

A motion was made by Councilman Nathan Thomas seconded by Councilman John Thomas authorizing the Stony Creek Chamber of Commerce Stony Creek Mountain Festival Committee permission to use the town park and pavilion for the Stony Creek Mountain Festival August 7th-9th, 2015. All in favor, motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Thomas seconded by Councilman Nathan Thomas authorizing Casandra Bennett to use the town hall April 18, 2015 for a Birthday Party. All in favor, motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman John Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan authorizing Tammy Bruns to use the town pavilion for a 50th Wedding Anniversary Party. All in favor, motion carried.

Old Business:

Dump cards:

058-15. A resolution was made by Councilman John Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan to mail the dump cards and continue with the Free Dump Day for the year 2015. Roll call vote, all in favor.

Kevin Page who owns the Old Grist Mill on Harrisburg Road would like to be included in the mailings.

Notice of Claim from Brett Bernansky was received on March 5, 2015:
Supervisor Thomas reported this was turned over to the town’s insurance co.

Stony Creek Fire Co. Service Award Length of Service was signed by the Town Board.

Assessor:

Supervisor Thomas stated last month Councilman Carl Thomas asked about the bill for the Assessors and we withdrew that bill and it was included in the bills this month. There was a bill for Brandon Thomas for mileage where he went up to Ray Brook for training and Supervisor Thomas informed the Board that Zack Thomas had received a Consent Order from the Department of Taxation and Finance. Mr. Thomas did sign that Consent Order on March 2, 2015 and sent it back. The courses he has to take, and there are about five of them: Fundamentals of Assessment Administration, Cost Market and Income Approach to Value, Fundamentals of Data Collection, Fundamentals of Mass Appraisal, and one of the following courses; Fundamentals of Forest Valuation, Commercial and Industrial Valuation and Introduction to Farm Appraisal.

The respondent specifically agrees to successfully complete Fundamentals of Assessment Administration and Cost, Market and Income Approach to Value by December 31, 2015. The remaining required components by December 2016. Supervisor Thomas stated there was a question about activity, he guesses there is activity.

Committee reports:

Youth:

Councilwoman Ryan reported that this past Saturday they had an animal show and about 70 people signed up for that.

Landfill:

Supervisor Thomas reported he received the Annual Ground Water Monitoring Report from Cedarwood Engineering. This is part of the reduced waiver on testing the wells.

Cell phone service; Verizon:

On February 27th, 2015 he had a meeting with Melissa Whorf a Representative from Verizon. Her reason to come meet with him was to sell us Verizon equipment, but as she found out on her way over, she didn't have service here. She is an enthusiastic person and was very willing to help us connect with Verizon as far as the town getting a tower or getting Verizon to build a tower. She did e-mail him back a week or so later and sent a property form you fill out if you're looking to have the town sited. So he filled it out for the landfill, transfer station area and he went to send it and it was rejected because they said they don't provide service in this area. So he notified her and she indicated the more property owners in the town that would fill out this form and send it in the better. So as soon as they get it straightened out so it will go though, if you know of anybody that might want a tower on their property and thinks they have a good location as she indicated the more applications they get the better.

Councilwoman Ryan stated she knows Verizon and AT&T, they have booster boxes that go through the Wi-Fi. That's another possibility for people in town too. If they have Wi-Fi they can go through these booster boxes and will enable them to have cell service.

Supervisor Thomas stated he is waiting to hear back from her. She is the type of person, as you call it the squeaky wheel gets the grease, he thinks she's the squeak.

Attorney Cooper asked how much land does the town own up by Lens Lake. Supervisor Thomas stated not very much. Attorney Cooper stated not much to stick on a tower? Supervisor Thomas stated not really. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated you would have big opposition up there. Councilman John Thomas stated they have to have power to that too right? Supervisor Thomas stated right, an access. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated they build nice roads, they just put one in Newcomb behind the ski lift. Supervisor Thomas stated they do pay rent so there is a financial incentive. There will be information to follow and we can get this out and promote it. We'll send out applications and maybe a year or two we'll actually have cell service. He doesn't know if everyone will be in favor of that. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated he knows they have a booster at The Market in town and they can stand at The Inn and get service. Councilman John Thomas stated most of his campers come up to get away from it. Supervisor Thomas stated he is sure that it's not 100% everybody is in favor of it.

New Business:

Senate Bill S1914-2015 and Assembly Bill A3721-2015:

Supervisor Thomas stated this resolution was given to him by Peter LaGrasse asking for the Town Board's support of Senate Bill S1914-2015 and Assembly Bill A3721-2015.

These bills "provides that authorities having control of a fire department or fire company which provides emergency medical services may establish fees and charges for services."

Sponsors of the Bills are Senate Little and Assemblyman Brindisi. Co-Sponsors in the Assembly are McDonald, Stec in the Senate are Carlucci and Valesky.

In both Houses it's in the Local Government Committee. It amends the General Municipal Law Section 209B 1.2B and the Town Law Section 184.

Councilwoman Ryan stated she doesn't want to charge the people they help especially if there out of town. That's how she feels.

Councilman Nathan Thomas stated he thinks it's a useful thing with more and more with our required health insurance. 90% of your people have health insurance, most ambulance service will not be able to afford hard billing most of them do soft billing. NYS says if you bill one you have to bill them all but he knows a lot of agencies in the area do bill and send two or three bills and if they don't get paid they just get filed, soft billing standard. So the idea is to mainly aim for the insurances.

Councilman John Thomas agrees with Councilwoman Ryan. We do get the funding from the town. Councilwoman Ryan stated they are still together, there not separate squads. Councilman John Thomas stated granted some of the supplies are getting more expensive as Peter LaGrasse knows. The costs are going up a little bit, not huge jumps. He is just wondering with the small amount of runs we do have, like Councilman Nathan Thomas said, if we bill one we have to bill for everybody. What would it cost us to do that? Are we going to lose money in the process of what we're going to collect?

Councilman Nathan Thomas stated if you read the bills that Supervisor Thomas handed out. If this gets approved then the Town Board doesn't have to necessarily tell the fire dept. they can't. That's up to the Board to approve the contract of the fire co. So it would be better to have the option. That ten-years down the road to possibly have this Bill to support when EMS becomes a \$100,000.00 a year tax bill. Luzerne has gone to an EMS District, Johnsbury EMS just went to EMS District. Right now it's not needed in Stony Creek but who would imagine that Luzerne or Hadley would need an EMS District.

Supervisor Thomas stated the bill does say "May establish". Councilman Nathan Thomas stated yes it say "May establish" so even if this bill gets passed it's up to the Town Board to update or not update the contract to allow the fire co. to bill. It may not apply to us but there maybe someone else out there that are looking to close their doors, another little town that can't afford it. So it's not just us.

Councilwoman Ryan stated people that push to get paid, that's why the doors get closed.

Councilman John Thomas stated it's a downhill slide and he hopes he doesn't get involved in it. Peter LaGrasse thanked Supervisor Thomas for doing more homework then he done and carried the ball with more information. He knew there would be an issue about, and Councilwoman Ryan mentioned it. The feeling about it's a volunteered service, you're doing a service to the

community and you don't want to charge. The reality is most people are on either Medicaid or Medicare in this community or have their own private insurance. He figured out what the financial impact would be estimating from the calls they have. He got it off the cuff estimate of what Medicaid would pay from Steve Emerson and he got an exact figure because it was on his computer on what Medicare would pay. They pay \$381.00 per call and if we had three-quarters of our calls with Medicare and one-quarter of Medicaid, we're talking about \$20,000.00 income. So that's a little bit of change. The other thing he looked into from their calls rough estimates, he ran through the run sheets and Lake Luzerne, their tech was approximately on five of Stony Creek's calls and transported by their ambulance another four. Sometimes their run sheets do not say which ambulance is responding for an intercept so it's a guess on his part. Warrensburg had three on board and five or six they transported directly. There is a time in which and Supervisor Thomas is getting the pressure on this constantly. Lake Luzerne wants to get paid for the calls that their supported ambulance is responding to in Stony Creek. We supply no support for that ambulance and the Town of Hadley and Day are paying through taxpayer's dollars to support that ambulance. So in other words this has the potential in the future of providing those funds through insurance that will not hurt the user of the service. He means as soon as they go to the hospital they are charged, it's not a free trip. So you have to think about, why would you have the ambulance part of that as a free trip when the rest are paying for. Their insurance is paying for it. The hospital couldn't exist if they weren't getting paid. You have to think in those terms. He also spoke to Travers Howe, Executive Director of Mountain Lakes Regional EMS Council. He knows about 26 fire co's. squads thinking about splitting off just so that they could bill. There are only two in Warren County. The rest are North, Essex County, St. Lawrence Co. that's all part of the Mountain Lakes Regional EMS Council. Travers Howe is absolutely in favor of this option to the point that he was not only going to e-mail the resolution and personally mail it to the fire co's. involved to get there support, because it is a direr need in many situations to get additional funding to run an ambulance as part of a fire co. That's all the background that's in it coupled with the fact that getting endorsement of this nature from the Board gives it a stronger chance of getting further in the legislature. If everyone wants to sit back and say I don't want to do it, nothing will happen. You're pendulous on this and you have to think both ways. You have to think many of these people they wouldn't be able to go to the hospital except that they have that insurance, Medicaid or Medicare. This is not going to hurt them one bit and as Councilman Nathan Thomas has said we don't twist arms, it's soft billing. If someone comes and says we can't really do this you just tell them to forget it. Councilwoman Ryan stated they tell everybody you don't have to do it and your back to square one. Mr. LaGrasse stated not really because the ones that have the insurance will send it in.

Councilman John Thomas asked who does the billing for Warrensburg. Do they bill themselves or do they have a company that does there medical billing. Mr. LaGrasse stated they have a woman that comes in and does it. Councilman John Thomas stated is that a paid position for medical billing. Mr. LaGrasse stated yes. Councilman John Thomas stated that's what he's saying, this is not for our fire co. but for other companies. Peter says we're going to make \$20,000.00 on calls, when we do that we will probably be required by the State to do a separate audit. Mr. LaGrasse stated absolutely. Councilman John Thomas stated at some point and we will have to have someone do the medical billing. His wife does medical billing, because each

one of these things that you bill for has to have a proper code to it. So it's not a simple thing like we're going to fill out a form and send it to Medicaid, it doesn't work that way.

Mr. LaGrasse stated your wife sees a broad spectrum of treatments. Councilman John Thomas stated you have to pay someone to do this, it's not something we can go in-house. Mr. LaGrasse stated possibly, if not them there are services that will gladly do it for you. Councilman John Thomas stated and they all cost money. Mr. LaGrasse stated true. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated Moreau, he rode with them a while, they have an in-house person who does medical coding and billing for a day job and volunteers to do theirs at no charge. So if you can find that person you'll be lucky and if you can't everything comes at a cost. Like Peter says this bill is just not pointed at us, there is 26 other squads, Fire Co. or towns that are having issues. So we separate from the fire co. and hope they still come out or you hope for a bill that's going to help you. It's a "you can" or it's not "you have" once this bill is passed. Councilwoman Ryan stated she is always going to be opposed to charging the people in this town. Supervisor Thomas stated he understands what you're saying but he has been pressured by Luzerne and Hadley basically they want money. Councilwoman Ryan stated everyone has to write their own PCR's regardless which ambulance they take and they are going to bill this person whether there in Stony Creek's ambulance or not. They are going to bill for their services. So now they want to get paid twice that's what you're saying. Peter stated not necessarily, if a tech comes on board. Councilwoman Ryan stated they have to do their own PCR and that's means all their information is going to be in their own records. Councilman John Thomas stated they will bill that patient themselves. Councilwoman Ryan agreed. Councilman John Thomas stated unless he has it wrong. If Warrensburg or Luzerne comes in with their tech they are going to bill that patient.

Peter stated on the Medicare the BLS is \$341.00 plus \$7.00 a mile and the ALS is \$405.98 and they can't double charge the mileage if it's in Stony Creek's ambulance. In other words they're getting about \$64.00 for that call. Yes they are billing but they are getting \$64.00 for their ALS prospect of their work at least that's what Steven Emerson told him. Councilwoman Ryan stated they are going to bill them for all the supplies they used because that's put into their computer. Peter LaGrasse stated those are the amounts they would be receiving. In other words a BLS ambulance on that run and with that mileage is getting the bulk of that money.

Councilwoman Ryan stated she thinks we should put it on the shelf.

Supervisor Thomas stated it does say "May" and obviously the Town Board is not going to agree to that and that's fine he doesn't have a problem with that, but he thinks also that there are other fire depts. that this would benefit and doesn't think it would hurt us to support it. Councilman John Thomas stated if it's something they want to try, he just knows what the numbers are and what he has seen that this is not going to work for us. He's not saying it won't work for another company he thinks there is one other agency in Warren County that runs their ambulance squad. Mr. LaGrasse stated Hague. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated it may work for the Town of Hague. Councilman John Thomas stated because they have more seasonal people. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated they have more seasonal and the motor vehicle accidents are quarter paid though No-fault Insurance. You either have health insurance or they fine you about \$485.99 for not having health insurance.

Peter stated the Medicare is about the bottom, in other words they wouldn't be billing \$300.00 they might be billing \$700.00.

Supervisor Thomas stated he looks at it as long as we're not required to do this he really doesn't have a problem with it. If it said "we shall" then that's different story. He thinks in Stony Creek we are very fortunate that we have the people that we have to provide the service on the volunteer basis, we're very fortunate that way and three of them sit right here. But that might not be the case everywhere.

Councilman John Thomas stated he just wouldn't want to be for it as a company. He wouldn't want to be forced into it. Peter stated the wording of the law, it's "May", "They May establish fee charges for services." But it's entirely squad by squad decision.

Supervisor Thomas stated it does say "May". They crossed out 'Shall' in two places and put "May". Councilman John Thomas stated like he said he wouldn't want to be forced into it. If EMS squads were in a money making business you wouldn't, look at Luzerne and other towns. How much of the taxpayer's money are they putting into this to keep the squad going at the end of the year? There at zero. It's not a money making business.

Supervisor Thomas agreed. Councilman John Thomas stated the only ones making the money are the employees, the EMT's and ALS. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated you can make more money bagging groceries than being a medic, they're not making much money. Empire starts at \$10.40 an hour for EMD's and medics are making \$12.00 an hour and that's after a two-year college degree. Supervisor Thomas asked the Board if they want to move forward or do we want to look at it some more or just forget about it.

Councilwoman Ryan stated she has to at least look at it little more, she doesn't want to rush into something.

Supervisor Thomas stated this will be tabled until next month. He also stated you can get the Bills on-line if you go to the Senate or Assembly website and put in the Bills Numbers.

Councilman John Thomas asked Mr. LaGrasse if the Mountain Lakes Council sent it through e-mail to each fire co. Mr. LaGrasse stated their fine with it. He hasn't checked the e-mail but said Mr. Howe was supporting it. Councilman John Thomas stated he didn't receive one for Stony Creek He has heard of it but this is the first he has seen the actual. Mr. LaGrasse stated he said he was sending it. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated he may assume Stony Creek had it because Pete's the one that started it as well. Mr. LaGrasse stated he was going to send it directly to those squads because he sees there is a need for it. No question about it. If they're in the process of splitting, which is an expensive process they are already made the decision they can't exist without billing. Councilman John Thomas stated you can't exist with just billing either.

Supervisor Thomas stated maybe he can get ahold of Senator Little and see what her intent is. If her intent is "May" and "Shall" isn't going to creep in there somewhere, see what her intent is.

Mr. LaGrasse stated its' clear in his printing of the bill that it's "May" They have comments and he checked them and all have been positive, he hasn't seen a negative comment on it.

Supervisor Thomas stated we'll give it a month and bring it up again.

Memorandum of Understanding:

Supervisor Thomas stated this came from Fred Monroe. It's basically a group of municipalities and Lake Association's throughout the Adirondacks to come together as an understanding as trying to control the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species within the Adirondacks. The Governor talked about it last week. There are 53 agencies in the municipalities that signed on. They didn't give them a lot of time to do this. We had a week to get this done. If it's something the Board thinks we should support he doesn't think it hurts us really.

Councilman John Thomas asked how much it's going to cost us. He sees on page 3, "municipalities will incorporate signage". So how much are we going to be responsible for? Supervisor Thomas stated the idea is to set up some inspections sites around the Park and he thinks that's what the signage is for. We could be responsible for a couple of signs.

Councilwoman Ryan asked if we would have to buy a high pressure decontamination. Supervisor Thomas stated he doesn't think that would be required. Councilman John Thomas stated it has 'entities' so that would be his question if it does then it includes us in a lot of stuff we may have to do.

Supervisor Thomas stated we have a couple of lakes but don't think they get a tremendous amount of use.

Councilman John Thomas stated the last paragraph says they will obtain grants to accomplish all these goals. Supervisor Thomas stated he thinks it's a worthwhile thing. He has heard the argument that if these invasives get into lakes and some are already in the lakes, you get Asian clams and start getting algae blooms your assessed value is going to diminish drastically. That's one argument he's heard several times. He doesn't think it would affect us all that much, like he says Lens Lake and Harrisburg Lake. He doesn't see us having a decontamination site or anything like that, maybe an information sign telling people to be aware of it. Supervisor Thomas stated you take Lake George, Town of Luzerne, Chestertown, not only Loon Lake but Schroon Lake, Brant Lake, they are spending a considerable amount of money now just removing milfoil. Luzerne spent approximately \$100,000.00 last year removing milfoil. Councilman John Thomas stated it's something we could support. Supervisor Thomas agreed and stated they are not going to force us to give them money. He thinks they are looking for help to support this.

059-15. A resolution was made by Supervisor Thomas seconded by Councilman John Thomas Authorizing the town to sign the Support of the Memorandum of Understanding Among Public and Private Organizations Regarding Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention in the Adirondack Region

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to describe an understanding among the diverse undersigned organizations representing state agencies, municipal governments, property owners, lake associations, conservation groups, and businesses regarding a program to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species in the Adirondack region. This MOU is not a binding commitment, but rather a statement of the intent of undersigned parties to work together in good faith, subject to the requirements of SEQRA and the availability of lawful appropriations and funding, to create an effective program in the Adirondack region that recognizes the following:

- The Adirondack region possesses one of the largest natural assemblages of valuable and vulnerable waterways in North America, including 3,000 lakes and ponds, and 30,000 miles of rivers and streams that represent the region’s chief economic asset; and
- Based on the most recent monitoring data from the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program and partners, the region is experiencing infestations of no less than 18 aquatic invasive and non-native species, and infestations pose a threat to the ecological health and economic future of the Adirondacks; and
- Nearly 200 aquatic invasive and non-native species exist in close proximity to the region including, as of 2011, 184 in the Great Lakes, 122 in the Hudson River, 49 in Lake Champlain, and 87 in the St. Lawrence River. Although a majority of these species are not spread by watercraft, this MOU pertains to those that may be introduced through the use of the same boat in different waterbodies as a means of transporting an aquatic invasive species; and
- The aquatic invasive species which may enter the region’s waterways or spread within the region include plants such as Hydrilla, Eurasian watermilfoil, and Water chestnut, and animals such as Quagga mussels, Asian clams, spiny waterflea , Zebra mussels, and pathogens – viral hemorrhagic septicemia; and
- Aquatic invasive species can spread through various means at different life stages including through boats in bilge waters, ballast waters, live well waters, anchors and in live bait containers often when they are in their juvenile, microscopic form; and
- A recent report commissioned by the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program entitled “The Actual and Potential Economic Impact of Invasive Species on the Adirondack Park: A Preliminary Assessment” very conservatively estimated that the spread of just eight high risk invasive species, including four aquatic invasive species, could result in an annual Loss of \$48 to \$53 million to recreation & tourism, agriculture, and forestry sectors in the park with a long-term loss of \$420 to \$840 million to lake shore property values; and
- A 2012 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service publication states that just one aquatic invasive plant, Eurasian water milfoil, reduced Vermont lakefront property values up to 16 percent and Wisconsin lakefront property values by 13 percent. That report also states that the cost of damage from invasive species in the United States exceeds \$120 billion annually; and
- Very few invasive species can be eradicated once established and control often involves costly actions implemented and underwritten in perpetuity without achieving the objective of eradication; and
- The draft NYS AIS Management Plan released in October, 2014 for public comment has stated the overarching goal of stopping the introduction and spread of AIS into and within New York’s waters. The Plan includes strategies and actions for improving prevention, detection, response, and agency capacity to manage AIS; and
- Aquatic invasive species spread prevention depends on a variety of strategies including inspection and removal of visible vegetation; thorough decontamination of watercraft and mandatory “Clean, Drained, and Dry (or decontaminated)” programs; and
- the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“NYSDEC”) is currently developing regulations which will be effective statewide to assist in the efforts to minimize the spread of aquatic invasive species by incorporating reasonable precautions boaters shall take

prior to launching a watercraft or a floating dock. These regulations will be in addition to the existing Department's regulation for the prevention of the spread of AIS at DEC boat launch sites, specifically Parts 59 and 190, and the regulations which provide for the protection of waters found in Part 608 of the Department's regulations, and furthermore, NYSDEC has existing signage addressing AIS at its sites; and

- Trailered boats are an important vector for the overland transport of aquatic invasive species from one waterbody to another. It is also well documented that investment in spread prevention of aquatic invasive species can be achieved at a fraction of the cost of managing subsequent infestations and avoids environmental damage associated with physical and chemical control actions; and

- Viable boat inspection, self-certification programs and decontamination programs have been established in New York State and other parts of the country with documented results in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species; and

- The Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program at Lake George is a 2-year pilot program implemented in 2014 that featured a partnership with State agencies and shared public/private investment to underwrite operations. More than 19,000 trailered boats were inspected and over 1,300 boats were decontaminated in its first season of operation. Nearly 150 cases of visible invasive species were "caught," including Eurasian water milfoil, Asian clams and Zebra mussels. Detailed evaluation of the program will be forthcoming at the conclusion of the pilot program but lessons learned from the Lake George program can be applied to invasive species prevention programs throughout the Adirondacks; and

- the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program has been in place since 2000 with strong public support that provides a natural region-wide network for an expanded prevention program throughout the Adirondacks featuring full inspection and decontamination capacity for local municipalities and lake associations; and

- Recreational boating and fishing provides an annual economic impact of \$ 5.79 billion and \$ 1.9 billion dollars respectively on an annual basis to New York State and is an important component of the tourism based economy of the Adirondacks. Given the importance of boating and fishing to the economic well-being of the Adirondacks, any inspection, self-certification and/or decontamination programs will be done in such a way that does not unduly restrict these activities; and

- Fishing and boating are activities that are not restricted to a specific portion of the day or year. Anglers for example, prefer to get on the water early to avoid other recreational boaters or late to fish for species such as walleye that are most effectively caught during low light periods.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED that the undersigned public and private entities support the efforts of the undersigned municipalities and interested parties to develop a new region-wide aquatic invasive species prevention program that may include stewardship and data collection, infrastructure and administration, subject to the availability of funding, for boat inspection and when necessary, decontamination, in order to protect water quality, public enjoyment and economic value to the maximum extent practicable by proactively preventing the introduction of new, and the spread of existing, aquatic invasive species in Adirondack waters; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities support the development and implementation of a regional policy of "Clean, Drained, and Dry (or decontaminated)" standard for all boats entering and exiting the region, applied to both launching and retrieving watercraft where possible, subject to SEQRA for actions by public entities; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities who do not currently have signage in place intend to develop, where appropriate, consistent signage in collaboration with appropriate state agencies, to inform boaters on both the threat of invasive species and prevention methods,

Including a "Clean, Drained and, Dry (or decontaminated) standard for transport and launching of watercraft; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities will further coordinate and evaluate i) the need for trailered boats entering and exiting the region to be assessed by inspection to determine compliance with a "Clean, Drained, and Dry (or decontaminated) " standard, ii) whether launching or retrieving, that all boats and trailers not meeting the standard are to be decontaminated with high pressure, hot water or other appropriate decontamination methodology; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities intend to cooperate with each other, to support an expanded aquatic invasive species prevention program throughout the Adirondack Park which complies with NYSDEC regulations, to explore ways to fund inspection and decontamination stations for installation at strategic high risk locations, including major entry points to the Adirondack Park, areas of user convenience, invasion spread hubs and identify the most suitable locations for such inspection stations within the Park with reference to the report, "Boat Inspection and Decontamination for Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention; Recommendations for the Adirondack Region", and other sites as required to provide optimal coverage and spread prevention; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities intend to work with appropriate authorities on a plan to implement an inspection certification program to designate boats that have been determined to meet the "Clean, Drained, and Dry (or decontaminated)" standard or which have been decontaminated and have not been launched in another waterbody; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities intend to work together to establish a training program for volunteers to staff and operate the inspection and decontamination stations; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities intend to prepare Memoranda of Understanding with marinas, motels, and launch facilities in order to implement the protocol for complying with "Clean, Drained, and Dry (or decontaminated)"; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities recognize the importance of the State of New York properties and the ability to launch from these sites that provide public access, and that the NYSDEC has regulations in place to manage and minimize the entry and exit for aquatic invasive species introduction and spread at these publically owned sites; and it is further

AGREED that the said entities believe this serious threat to the ecological and economic health of the Adirondack region, through negative impacts to water quality and infrastructure, tourism revenues and property values, constitutes the need for the undersigned to cooperatively develop a reasonable protocol to follow at the earliest possible time, with the 2015 boating season as the target date; and it is further

AGREED that the said private entities, local municipalities and state agencies who are signatories to this MOU intend to work together to identify and develop opportunities to obtain

public grants subject to lawful appropriations and private grants in order to support the development and implementation of a region-wide aquatic invasive species spread prevention and decontamination program in a similar manner as has been successfully demonstrated by the efforts at Lake George and by emerging local programs established by a growing number of lake associations; and it is further

AGREED that this Memorandum of Understanding may be signed in counterparts.

Property Tax Freeze:

Supervisor Thomas stated that our Legislature and Governor have decided that it's a good thing for the State. He will say that we are obligated to do this. He will also say that as far as he is concerned it's nothing but a scam on the people of the State and that it's basically the Governor and State Legislature because they don't have guts enough to do what they should do down there and take care of business in Albany. They're blaming local government and school Districts for the high property taxes. That being said we are required to do this. The first part of it is we have to come up with a plan by June 1st to save 1% of our 2014 tax levy. We can choose that on our own or we can also choose to join the county and go through whatever plan the county comes up with and just be a part of it. Obviously the State prefers that because there's only 52 counties and there's 900 and some towns, so they don't want to look over 900 plans. So that encourages him to send in our own plan. Councilman John Thomas agreed. Supervisor Thomas stated because this is ridiculous because you're going to end up getting a rebate check for \$5.00. If the governor had taken the million dollars that they put into administrating the Rebate Check Program and taken that money and applied it to each County to lower the amount of Medicaid the taxpayers are paying for an applied that every year everyone would have received a tax cut and a sizable one. Warren County spends 13 million a year on Medicaid alone.

This is totally ingenuous and BS. It's just a game they use to get re-elected.

Attorney Cooper asked what happened to our plan B to reduce unfunded mandates by 1%?

Supervisor Thomas stated well there you go because they had a Mandate Commission and it lasted about a year and it's totally dissolved and don't hear anything about it anymore. The mandates been all taken care of he guesses. But he doesn't think that's the case. NYS is the only State in the Country where the local property taxpayers pay 25% of Medicaid Bill. Usually its 50% State, 50% Federal Government. The local is not even involved and beyond that there 400% of the poverty rate of the Federal Property Guidelines. NYS has increased it by 400%. So we're not only paying 25% we're paying the premium. It's the best Medicaid in the Country and we're paying for it, the property taxpayers. It's outrageous, they sit there and run around and blame the locals, all these towns. There's too many towns, these too many school districts it's all out of control. No, the people out of control are sitting in Albany because they're gutless because they don't have the guts to change this, so they come up with these little scams to get themselves re-elected and meanwhile the average person doesn't know this stuff. So they think they're going to get a rebate check, that's great so they think they're wonderful.

Attorney Cooper stated its part of Cuomo's resume to run for President, to reduce taxes by x%.

Supervisor Thomas stated he's sure. They keep squeezing us, you look at fuel it's down now but it wasn't down a year ago. It was up quite a bit, you look at salt, salts doubled, tripled in the last 10-15 years. Blacktop, pavement has doubled, tripled and they put us under a 2% tax cap.

And that's like 1½% actually and now they want us to reduce by 1%. When you have all these increase costs and everything it's just not going to work. It will work for them.

Attorney Cooper stated so can they balance the plan send it back and say it's a no good plan.

Supervisor Thomas stated probably yes. It says that Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature enacted the Property Tax Freeze Credit as part of the 2015 State Budget.

The new law encourages local governments and school districts to generate long-term tax relief for New York State Taxpayers by: sharing services, consolidating or merging or demonstrating and implementing operational efficiencies. The Freeze Credit will go to qualified homeowners. To qualify, a homeowner must: be eligible for the Star Program, Property exemption, and live in a taxing jurisdiction that both limits any increase in its tax levy to a property tax cap set by State Law; and develops and implements a Government Efficiency Plan determined to be compliant by the New York State Division of Budget. Qualified homeowners will receive a Freeze Credit equal to the greater of the actual increase in their homeowner's tax bill or the previous year's tax bill multiplied by an inflation factor (the lesser of 2% or inflation). For 2014 the inflation factor for school districts is 1.46%. So in year one the homeowners will receive the Freeze Credit if their local government or school district stays within the property tax cap. Last Fall was year one. by year two the program, homeowners will receive the freeze credit for taxing jurisdictions in which the homeowner resides that stay within the property tax cap and put forward a compliant plan to save one percent of their tax levies in each of the following three years. Local governments and school districts may take a variety of approaches to develop their Government Efficiency Plans, but they are strongly encouraged to convene and facilitate a process to develop and submit county-wide or BOCES region-wide Government Efficiency Plans. It's is expected to result in over \$1.5 billion in direct property tax relief over three years and it's just goes on.

Councilman John Thomas stated if we do this plan and don't need it what's the consequences of that? Attorney Cooper stated you mean if it's not approved? Councilman John Thomas stated if we say we're going to save 1% and we don't meet that. Supervisor Thomas if we don't meet the 1%? Councilman John Thomas stated if we have a Winter like we just had and the roads aren't very good, we get flooding and a few other issues that usually come up, there is no way you can save it. Supervisor Thomas stated he would assume that they wouldn't get their rebate check.

Our decision here tonight is do we want to do this on our own? If you look at the 2014 levy for the town it was \$650,964.00. 1% of that is \$6509.64. Fire protection is \$113,000.00. So that's another \$1130.00. The total is \$7600.00. He was looking at it today and our 2015 levy is \$640,000.00. So we already met the 1% plus. He doesn't know how that works either. We're down \$10,316.00 over 2014. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated so we can send in the budget in anticipation of this bill must be. Supervisor Thomas stated he guess so, we were thinking ahead. Attorney Cooper stated you're going to end up writing a Local Plan if we have to do it locally. Supervisor Thomas stated right. He will say the County was anticipating using the sale of Westmount to accomplish these savings and was willing to extend that to everybody in the County. If you've been following what's happening with Westmount sale that's not a sure thing anymore. So he's not so sure that's going to work out. Councilman John Thomas stated it doesn't sound it because they're looking to sell the property across from the Municipal Center.

Supervisor Thomas stated yes and there is a Petition for Referendum being circulated for Westmount and if they get 2000 signatures it will go to a vote, the vote will determine. The Referendum will be about whether the County should have put Westmount up to bid or done the RFP process that they did. If it's voted down then basically the County has to put it out to bid and he thinks at this point if they put it out to bid they won't get many responses or no responses. He anticipates they will get the 2000 signatures. Attorney Cooper asked where that would be on the General Ballot in November or Special Election. Supervisor Thomas stated unless they force a Special Election, yes and there is a \$40,000.00 price tag to that. On the other hand there is a \$166,000.00 price tag to keep Westmount operating each month.

They did have a Shared Service Meeting. There were a lot of things talked about. One was Animal Control, he's not sure that would benefit us. He's not sure they would get the service that there saying we would. The County tells us a lot of things but he doesn't see them over here that much.

They talked about County-wide assessing, they talked about purchasing. Onondaga County set up a Purchasing Plan where it covers everybody in the County, all the school districts towns and everything. They put everything together so they go out and buy 10 trucks at one time. They talked about EMS and computer programs. The County Treasurer's Office is involved in the Tax Collection Program that the IT Department wrote and the Treasurer feels that could be implemented in every town, it would save each town the maintenance fees or licensing fees. The way he understands it, you can go back to 2012. Any kind of savings you accomplished from 2012 forward can be counted toward this. He's not sure how they're going to accomplish that because the savings doesn't have to be shown until 2016-2017-2018. He did get a letter from the Association of Towns, that if you joined NYMIR since 2012 that could be used as part of the savings plan. We did join the MEGA Program and we get our electricity supplied through Integrys. So whatever savings you can calculate what it cost us with National Grid that we saved with Integrys, whatever ever else we want to reduce.

Councilman John Thomas stated it sounds like we met it. Supervisor Thomas stated he was looking at it today and he agrees and thinks we're done. He is going to call them and find out. Attorney Cooper stated you're going to need to know tonight if you're going to do it locally or the County because it has to be in by June. Supervisor Thomas stated June 1st.

Attorney Cooper stated it doesn't seem fair to put this additional burden on Supervisor Thomas's shoulders but he's in the best position to furnish this information and really doubt the County will know about all these little things he mentioned. Supervisor Thomas stated not to bad-mouth the County but we are the smallest town in the County. These things may work well for other towns, he's not sure all this stuff will work so well for us. He thinks the more of these things is that the town does have a little control over it that if we shift it to the County at some point what do we do let the county run the place? We pay for road patrol right now but he doesn't see them over here very often. It's not like there sitting out here writing tickets which they can do anytime they wanted to. They have no incentive to do that whatsoever but we're paying 1.38% of the bill. But they don't really seem to care. Councilman John Thomas stated he would say if we can do it on our own, do it our own. Councilwoman agreed.

Budget Transfer:

060-15. A resolution was made by Councilwoman Ryan seconded by Councilman Nathan Thomas authorizing the following budget transfer:

Debit Appropriated Fund Balance in the amount of \$7000.00.

Credit A6989.44 Other Economic Development-Creek Center in the amount of \$7000.00.

Roll call vote, all in favor.

From the floor:

A motion was made by Councilman John Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Harrington, RMC
Town Clerk