

# THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area

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The “Baker”y, Janet & Mike Denney and Louise & Skip Belden**

## **NOTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 9<sup>TH</sup> VILLAGE BOARD MEETING**

The Fact Finder’s editor, as its reporter, was unable to attend the February Board meeting; however, I have read the Minutes and would like to make a few comments and alert readers to some up-coming events.

Of vital interest to all residents are many of the items from Fire Chief Hughes’ report: OSHA training for Surface Ice Rescue; new High Band Mobile Radios have been installed in Chief Hughes’ and Assistant Chief Ron Van Slooten’s personal vehicles (making them more readily available to answer calls for help); Chief Hughes attended a CP Railway Cold Weather/Ice-Oil Response Training (there can never be too much preparation for this kind of emergency, particularly as Port Henry has oil tankers streaming by in an ever increasing number) . The South siren remains out of service until International Paper Company’s Maintenance Crew (as good-Samaritans) inspects and repairs the siren’s motor.

Mayor Guerin asked Chief Hughes if CP Rail has made materials available in the event of a crude oil explosion. Chief Hughes said that CP Rail has large quantities of foam available in case of an emergency.

The DPW report was “chilling” as you realized our Crew was out repairing four water breaks and spending fifty hours plowing and removing snow, including over the weekend.

Trustee Rich reported that, in an update on zoning, seven letters of support for Village Zoning had been forwarded to the Essex County Planning Department on January 23, 2015.

A continuing reminder: **Village Elections will be held on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**. Staley Rich and Matthew Brassard will be returning, uncontested, as Trustees and incumbent Ernie Guerin and previous Trustee Jack Sheldon are running for Mayor. **Elections will be held at the Port Henry Firehouse on Church Street; polls will be open from 12:00 pm to 9:00 pm.**

A resolution authorizing Mayor Guerin to execute the Water Quality Improvement Project grant application for the Storm Water Abatement and Reconstruction Project was passed.

The Phase II Elizabeth Street Project bid was awarded to AES Northeast, LLC, whose proposal came in at \$24,780.00, considerably lower than other bids due to the fact that AES had already completed the engineering required for the project.

The following discussions are of main interest to help residents to understand some of the necessary inner workings of the Board, previous treasurer Janelle Jurkiewicz asked what the cash flow situation was at this time. It was indicated that the water fund is in peril due to the sub-zero temperatures and storms, which contributed to an increase in overtime for snow removal and repairing water breaks. Ms. Jurkiewicz suggested that the Board and Treasurer Monette may want to consider issuing a spending freeze as in previous years, as a precautionary measure. Ms. Jurkiewicz explained the cause of the annual cash flow issues. Jim Hughes asked it would be prudent to take out another

Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) and Ms. Jurkiewicz said that the Village has not had to do so for the past three years and she does not recommend it, unless necessary. She also noted that the General Fund may loan monies to the Water and Sewer Funds, but that the Water and Sewer funds could not loan monies to the General Fund. She further said that part of the cash flow issue stems from pulling money out of the unexpended fund balance every year to offset an increase in the property taxes; the Board agreed.

John Viestenz previously has brought up the topic of placing the Village financials on the website, such as the balance sheet and the income statement. Ms. Jurkiewicz is also interested in seeing this information on the website and would be willing to work with Mr. Viestenz and Treasurer Monette to help accomplish this.

**Editor's Note: Fact Finder will be making every effort to get the reporting of both Village and Town Board meetings back on schedule.**

**A THANK YOU!**

In the last issue of Fact Finder there was a request for NEWS, as was mentioned, a paper cannot function without news. Here is the very first response to that request, and a jolly good first it is!

**Mineville VFW Post 5802  
Chicken BBQ and Chinese Auction  
Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup> from 4 – 7 pm  
Sponsored by Mineville Oil & Boyea's Grocery**

Tickets are \$8.00 pre-sale at Mineville Oil, Boyeas Grocery, VFW Lanes, Angies Golden Scissors, Kings Inn and Kings Corner, until March 14<sup>th</sup> (\$10.00 at the door).

Note: \$10.00 in coupons for each dinner purchased from local businesses. The Chicken BBQ will consist of one-half Chicken, Baked Potato, Coleslaw, Baked Beans, Roll, Butter and Dessert. For more information call 942-7514.

**A "TOURISM DESTINATION" MEETING HELD IN PORT HENRY**

Matt Courtright of the Ti Chamber coordinated a meeting, held on Thursday February 27 at the Port Henry Diner, concerned with creating a plan to increase our surrounding area's drawing power for tourists. There were representatives of businesses and organizations from Hague, Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Port Henry, Moriah and Jim McKenna, of ROOST management, who anchored the discussion.

An area plan such as this would increase chances for obtaining different grants, as joint efforts are looked upon with favor when grants are being granted. After some discussion, it seemed there was general agreement as to what draws tourists to any area. Some mentioned were a choice of pleasant short or long term accommodations; good food available, breakfast, lunch and dinner, seven days a week; shops to be explored; expected amenities such as internet access; local points of interest to visit, such as the Fort at Ticonderoga and offering activities, as swimming, canoeing and hiking. It was suggested to begin by concentrating on bring seasonal and work toward being year around. There will be another such meeting March 25<sup>th</sup>. It was suggested that at this meeting, each representative bring in a list of doable goals for existing needs in their specific area and a realistic time frame for accomplishing these goals.

John Viestenz has written concerning the Port Henry-Moriah's "insufficient internet access" in certain areas. "The Town of Moriah is not served by either cable or DSL in many of the outlying (rural) areas, and this lack of suitable internet access is a serious obstacle to the growth of businesses in two areas: 1) "across the tracks", and 2) along the highway in Cheever. Time Warner's cable system does not serve areas that are isolated from the Village by the railroad tracks. Campgrounds and

Marinas are not able to provide their customers the internet access that should be available.

Similarly, the tourist cabins near Cheever have no access to the internet: no cable, no DSL. Earlier attempts to use satellite service were found to be impractical (or impossible)."

Then John asks, "What are the specific needs to create a "tourist destination" in Port Henry (or anywhere in Moriah?" and suggests: "15 additional (new or remodeled) modern rooms for overnight lodging; at least 3 new retail businesses (small shops) in the core Port Henry downtown commercial area; improved walkway/bikepaths from the marinas to "downtown", and/or a shuttle service that loops between the campgrounds, marinas, downtown, and the businesses in Moriah Corners, Moriah Center and Mineville." Apropos of the emphasis of the Tourism Destination meeting John questioned, "Should not the shared Town/Village/Chamber website be used for linking to other regional sites, publicizing area-wide activities...in the whole Adirondacks or Lake Champlain Area?"

At this point, I would like to interject another idea for making "lemonade" out of the "lemon" of poor internet access. For those lodging offerings affected by this lack, make a point of this lack as a benefit for allowing time for reading and mental relaxation and offer something special only to your establishment such as a fabulous breakfast to send them on their way of exploration. I experienced this on a recent gift trip to Martha's Vineyard. Our B&B was Victorian and offered no TV, but it did have the greatest breakfast! If the weather was beautiful, this breakfast was served in their garden (if rain, their dining room was quite nice). The breakfast itself had choices on the menu and seconds could be had if you had the room for it. Different types of muffins were baked fresh by the owner. Miss the lack of TV, absolutely not. I would return again and again, except there are so many other destinations to be visited and right here in the Adirondacks. I feel so lucky to live here and don't really feel the need of a vacation. Don't just buy local, vacation local.

There is another important organization Lakes to Locks which is promoting tourism also, but more the specific, already existing historical and natural points of interest for tourists. They are in the process of creating a map of such points for tourist to follow. These two organizations seem such a compliment to one another that it would seem they should join their efforts. They may have already done this and Fact Finder did not discover this fact.

### A PLEA!

Fact Finder would like to encourage each and every resident of Port Henry to pick one organization and donate some volunteer time to them and also attend, just once a month, the Village Board Meeting (second Monday every month at Village Hall) and, for an even better understanding of what is happening to you on a daily basis and at tax times, attend the Town Board Meeting (second Thursday every month at the Court House in PH).

Although we *have* been doing better these past few years, if every resident would do just one or two of the three things mentioned above, Port Henry/Moriah would really begin to thrive – noticeably! Years ago when a neighbor needed a barn, everyone helped build it and it was up in a day (uh, maybe two). A village needs all its neighbors, not just a few, helping in its care and growth. Never feel that what you offer is too small. Your time, your attendance and attention at a Board meeting is so valuable. The Chamber needs people to attend to the phones in the office, just a few hours a day. Labor Day Celebration does not happen by magic. People are needed to make a few phone calls to prospective vendors, prospective marching bands, prospective food providers, etc. and etc. One or two or even three people, alone, cannot make this happen. Call the Chamber and leave your number, saying you can help, many hands, as is said, make a task very easy. The number for the Chamber is: [518-250-1050](tel:518-250-1050).

### REMEDY FOR "DOWN-IN-THE-DUMPS"

"In many shamanic societies, if you came to a medicine person complaining of being disheartened, dispirited, or depressed, they would ask one of four questions: When did you stop

dancing? When did you stop singing? When did you stop being enchanted by stories? When did you stop being comforted by the sweet territory of silence?" Gabriella Roth via one of Jennifer Moore's Facebook entries.

I took measure of myself concerning these four questions and was able to respond fairly positively. I have always sung (seemingly even before I spoke in sentences) and still do, sing that is. Absolutely love stories, from Aesops fables to Harry Potter and on to the latest book on everyone's to-read list. Silence is a territory I value highly, particularly in the mornings, *nothing* is on until mid-day. When did I stop dancing? I never did it very well, but really stopped? several years ago, when arthritis began to dictate what I could and could not do. Ah well, the world has lost very little with the loss of my dancing and I am only one-fourth down-in-the-dumps. Take your own measure on these questions and if you think you may be heading for "the dumps", try a medicinal dose of dancing, singing, reading or extended wonderful silence. If it had been my questions, I would have added, when did you stop laughing – best if it is at your own life mishaps.

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!"When did you stop dancing?  
When did you stop singing? When did you stop being  
enchanted by stories? When did you stop being  
comforted by the sweet territory of silence?"

Gabrielle Roth

Look for the next issue on **Saturday, March 21, 2015** at Mac's, Moriah Pharmacy, Sherman Free Library, George's Restaurant, John Eisenberg's Service Center, Ken and Paula LaDeau's Champlain's Best Wash, Don Foote's "Miss Port Henry" Diner, and TFCU. NOTE: The Fact Finder may also be found on-line at [porthenrymoriah.com](http://porthenrymoriah.com). "Fact Finder" is the first item on the third drop-down menu.