

THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area

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Nancy & Kim Gilbertson, Lisa McKenzie and Ladeau's *Champlain's Best Wash*

A SMALL BUT IMPORTANT OMMISION

In its last issue, the Fact Finder omitted where "POTSDAM," a quoted article, originated. Correction: the article was printed in the **1/7/2016 issue of the Watertown DailyTimes.**

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NOTES OF FEBRUARY 2, 2016

President Cathy Sprague, Treasurer Ashliegh Christian. Secretary Sandra Lovell, board members Gayle Baker and Janell Jurkewicz, Ronnie Cunningham and Nancy and Kim Gilbertson of Port Henry attended the Tuesday February 2nd meeting of the Moriah Chamber of Commerce at its office on Main Street in Port Henry.

The January Minutes were accepted after the following correction was made: the coin drop date of July 30th was incorrect and was changed to the correct date of April 30th. Also approved was the treasurer's report.

The Chamber is fortunate to be able to welcome the Gilbertsons into its ongoing area efforts. They bring with them that wonderful and rare commodity - volunteerism. Also, they donated to the Chamber's efforts, Lake Logo T-shirts and Sweat shirts.

As requested Linda Smyth had met with Tom Loreman concerning the printing of Moriah Chamber of Commerce decals and banners for Chamber member businesses. It was decided to approve the purchase of the decals and wait for a further price search on the banners. Banner discussion continued, concerning the cost to put them up and take them down, where the existing brackets are stored and whether businesses located outside the central area of the village or town should be accommodated by having their banner close the their business itself. Although it was not decided, the majority at the meeting seemed to feel that proximity to a business was a fair expectation.

Suggestions for Champ Day were offered and discussed: a shuttle for Champ Day; having a band at the beach seemed to be a need, so different band's names were put forth and, if under consideration, will be contacted; vendors were discussed, particularly food vendor's, noting that they must be licensed and it's their responsibility to obtain the license; children's games will be offered; have an August fund raiser using the cruise boat from Basin Harbor. The question of whether we could or should use the pier was asked. It was suggested to run a coloring contest of Champ in area newspapers (well before the event) to raise interest in Champ Day. Kelly Valentine wishes to hold a 5k race on that day and someone suggested that a new Champ costume should be found or made. **Champ Day will be on July 17th from 10:00 am – 3:00 PM.** Too early to mention an event in July? Not really, as Christmas was yesterday and Easter is tomorrow!

If any person or business would like to attend a Chamber meeting, you are encouraged to do so. Our membership is beginning to grow by leaps and bounds, come be a part of our growth and the growth of the Moriah area. It is best to call to confirm the next meeting's date, particularly in the winter. Phone: 518-250-1050 (Note: from some locations, you may need to dial all 10-digits).

The next Chamber meeting will be on that once-in-four-years day February 29th, a special day for a special meeting with ROOST, but at the usual time, 4 PM and at the usual place, the Chamber office on Main Street. Please note that the March monthly meeting will still be held on Tuesday the 8th. Those of the area who are interested in becoming members of the Moriah Chamber of Commerce or, or simply interested in finding out exactly what a Chamber does, please attend a meeting and find out.

VILLAGE OF PORT HENRY BOARD MEETING NOTES OF FEBRUARY 8, 2016

Chip Perry, head of the Water Plants, had only good news to report. Both sewer and water-filtration plants were operating with no problems and winter maintenance is in full swing.

“Digger” Laing, head of the DPW, reported that besides its general “housekeeping” of the village, the crew had been busy with addressing specific maintenance needs, such as a hydrant on 1st Street, a water break on College Street, putting in sewer plugs, cold patching, and replacing septic tanks at the beach.

Fire Chief Hughes reported that the PHFD had responded to two calls in January and two, to date, in February. These calls plus OSHA and additional training resulted in the expenditure of 226.12 Man-hours. The department was pleased to report the installation of a new toilet in the Ladies Bathroom and a new sink and drain in the Kitchen area. These mundane accomplishments may not seem “news” worthy, but they are, when you continually maintain a top-notch department on a limited budget and a dependence on as much grant money for which you can apply then, hope to receive.

An appeal for help in preserving Henry’s Garage, the home of the Port Henry Fire Department, has been sent to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy. This appeal was sent to RPI because, for his senior thesis, Earl Henry designed the Garage to accommodate his family’s existing livery business and their new automobile sales and service business. The garage incorporated an early use of an elevator, which is still in use. Earl and his brother Harold, who also had attended RIP, built the garage in 1911.

Warning: there seems to be a rather determined and continuing rumor infecting the village. It concerns the buying of a grand “new” fire engine by the PHFD. Would the department benefit in its ability to better serve Port Henry and other nearby fire departments? Definitely, yes, but following a longstanding rule of good business, you project what your future need will be, then try to have it before an emergency dictates how quickly you must acquire the needed item and because of this necessity for speed, it could possibly cost more.

Correction of the rumor. No! The Village’s fire department has *not* bought, nor is it in the process of buying a “new” fire engine. It has just been practicing that projecting-for-the-future rule of good business.

Janell Jurkiewicz reported for the Moriah Chamber of Commerce that the Chamber will be sponsoring Champ Day at the Port Henry Beach on **Sunday, July 17th**. This event in combination with the Port Henry Marina’s Antique Boat Show, which is scheduled on the same day, should assure a large crowd for the events.

Trustee Matt Brassard reported on the recent meeting with the dissolution committee and the Laberge Group and some of the points discussed and decided upon concerning fire districting to be included in the dissolution “plan.”

A Special Meeting, as part of the dissolution process, is scheduled for **Monday February 22nd at 7 PM** at the Port Henry Village Hall. The Laberge Group will present the proposed Dissolution Plan to the Village Board for review. While the Special Meeting is open to the public, a public comment period will **not** be permitted; however, a Public Hearing **will** be scheduled for a later date (to be determined) for the purpose of presenting the proposed plan to the public for review, comments and questions.

Requests for Quotes (RFQ’s) for engineering on the reconstruction of sewer and water facilities on Rice Lane were due by Monday February 8th. Quotes/Proposals were opened publicly and read aloud in the order in which they were received. Which of the seven companies will be awarded the job will be decided by a point system. The proposals evaluations will be completed by February 19th and all respondents will be notified promptly.

The latest news from the “manhole 13” project is that the Village is ready but is awaiting other permits from CP Rail.

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The Campground was discussed at length. It was decided to have three life guards as they had last year but the pay schedule will be decided at a later date. Dates for the 2016 season are as follows: the campground will open **Friday May 6th** and will close **Sunday October 2nd**. The Beach will open **Saturday June 18th** and will close **Sunday August 28th**. The Board was very impressed with last season's manager, Norman Wright and was happy to announce that he would be returning this coming season. It was also decided there would be no changes in campground rates/fees.

IMPORTANT VILLAGE NOTICES

The Village Office will be closed on Monday February 15th in observance of Presidents Day.

Garbage will be picked up in the Village on Tuesday February 16th.

A GREAT MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

The Town of Moriah came alive with Saint Patrick's Church's 5th annual Mardi Gras festivities held at the purple, gold and green decorated Knights of Columbus in Port Henry. Over 130 people attended this free, open-to-all fun event. Not only church members and Port Henry residents enjoyed themselves, visitors from nearby hamlets and villages also came to enjoy the fun.

From its time of 5:30-7:30 PM to its being free, the event was designed to be a family night out, but *everyone* could and did enjoy themselves. Penelope the Clown delighted the crowd, encouraging games such as musical chairs, which can become a giggle-producing chaos; and dances, from the chicken dance to the limbo and with many more in between. Face painting and animal balloons delighted children and adults alike.

The Mardi Gras theme assured plenty of delicious food in the New Orleans tradition, featuring rice and sausage jambalaya, sweet corn, French bread and King's cake.

Pictures could be taken after "dressing up" in boas, fedoras, face masks, glasses, etc., costumes which were provided to help establish the Mardi Gras mood.

It was a heaven of craft tables set up all around for children to choose from. Beads for making necklaces and paper crowns to color were handed out to everyone who wanted them. The annual 5th Mardi Gras celebration definitely proved that the more is the merri-est.

TOWN OF MORIAH BOARD MEETING NOTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2016

After the Pledge of Allegiance and the acceptance of the previous meeting's minutes, it was noted there were no bids on the transfer station's scrap metal. The floor was then opened to the public, but there were no public comments.

The rules governing the transfer station's acceptance of refrigerators was further clarified. There are now refrigerators which do not use Freon and these will be accepted without being drained. It was pointed out that air-conditioners do still use Freon and must be drained.

The Highway Department reported on truck breakdowns and repairs, and that the sander truck could be used as a general backup truck.

At January's Board meeting, Supervisor Scozzafava had said he would like to know the number of new homes which had been built in Moriah over the years. Research found that in the last ten years 62 new homes had been built.

Property maintenance came under discussion again. The Town is determined that property owners who have received a notice that they must clean up their property within a certain time can be taken to court if they do not comply. If Town laws are not effective enough, then New York State Maintenance laws will be used.

The new Titus Road pump system is in place and functioning excellently and economically.

The Board decided to keep the same rates for the Campground as last season's and is still looking to fill the position of Director of the school's summer youth program.

The Moriah Hydro Project is still on hold while waiting for FERC (Federal Regulatory Commission) to complete its necessary investigation into surveys and water rights.

Broad Band for the area is waiting on the State to release the budgeted funds.

The Board approved the following resolutions: 1) a refund to Yandon Dillon for a water-billing error, 2) approved Champlain Area Trails purchase of parcel #97.5-6-12.001 to extend the Cheney Mountain Trail for a Smart Growth Grant. If purchased, land would be deeded to the town.

NOTE: Town Board meetings are videoed and can be watched in their entirety on You Tube a few days after the meeting.

Look for the next issue on **Saturday, February 27, 2016** 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.