

The Special Board Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Brighton was held on Thursday, February 27, 2003, at 6:30 p.m. at the Brighton Town Hall, Paul Smiths, NY, with the following:

PRESENT: Supervisor Robert Tebbutt

Council Members: Alicia Bodmer
Linda Dobson
John Quenell
Steve Tucker

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Elaine Sater-Town Clerk, Amber McKernan-Tax Collector, and Don Oliver-Superintendent of Highways

RESIDENTS: There was one resident present

Meeting was Called to Order by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt at 6:30 p.m. The reason for the meeting was to discuss the new Highway Garage and other town business.

Public Notice was posted on the Town Clerk's Signboard and faxed to the Adirondack Daily Enterprise on February 18. It was placed in the three post offices and local businesses in the Town on February 19, 2003.

1. 2002 BAN FROM TUPPER LAKE BANK FOR SNOWPLOW: Tupper Lake Bank had the lowest interest rate of 1.88% of the three banks surveyed

RESOLUTION #24

AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE BAN FOR \$80,000 TO REFINANCE 2002 SNOWPLOW

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Brighton, Franklin County, New York, held at the Brighton Town Hall, Paul Smiths, New York, on the 27th day of February, 2003 at 6:30 clock P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, and upon the roll being called, the following were present.

PRESENT: Supervisor Robert Tebbutt

Council Members:- John Quenell
Linda Dobson
Alicia Bodmer
Steve Tucker

ABSENT: NONE

The following resolution was offered by John Quenell, who moved its adoption, seconded by Alicia Bodmer, to-wit:

BOND RESOLUTION DATED FEBRUARY 27, 2003

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN \$80,000.00 BOND ANTICIPATION NOTE OF THE TOWN OF BRIGHTON, FRANKLIN COUNTY, NEW YORK, TO REFINANCE THE NEW DUMP TRUCK WITH SNOW PLOW ATTACHMENT PURCHASED IN 2002

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Brighton, Franklin County, New York, by Resolution # 23-2002 duly adopted on the 14th day of February, 2002 authorized the Town of Brighton to solicit bids for the purchase of a new dump truck with snow plow attachment, and

WHEREAS, following the solicitation and advertising for bids, M.A. Jerry and Company, Inc. submitted the lowest bid of \$129,703.00, and

WHEREAS, the Town purchased a new dump truck with snow plow attachment on or about March 1, 2002, and

WHEREAS, the Bond Anticipation Note authorized by the Town on March 1, 2002 for the purchase of the new dump truck with snow plow attachment will mature on March 1, 2003, and

WHEREAS, it is desired that \$80,000.00 of such cost be refinanced from the proceeds of obligations to be issued pursuant to the Local Finance Law, and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it hereby RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Brighton, Franklin County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. The specific object or purpose for which obligations are to be issued pursuant to this resolution is to refinance the new dump truck with snowplow attachment purchased in March 2002. The cost of the new dump truck with snowplow attachment in March of 2002 was \$129,703.00. At that time, a \$100,000 bond was issued with a maturity date of March 1, 2003, and the balance of \$29,703.00 was paid from the Town Highway Fund.

Section 2: The maturing \$100,000 bond will be paid as follows: a sum of \$80,000.00 will be refinanced by the issuance of a bond pursuant to this resolution; and the remaining \$20,000 plus outstanding interest will be paid from the Town highway fund.

Section 3: For the specific object or purpose of paying the cost of the new dump truck with snow plow attachment, there is hereby authorized to be issued a \$80,000.00 bond of said Town in accordance with the plan set forth above, and pursuant to the provisions of the Local Finance Law. Such bond shall be dated approximately as of March 1, 2003 and the power to fix and determine the exact date of such bond is hereby delegated to the Town Supervisor.

Section 4: It is hereby determined that the period of probable usefulness of the aforesaid specific object or purpose is fifteen (15) years for the dump truck with snow plow attachment (pursuant to Section 11.00[a][28] of the Local Finance Law).

Section 5: It is hereby further determined that the maximum maturity of the bond herein authorized will not exceed one (1) year.

Section 6: Subject to the provisions of the Local Finance Law, the power to authorize the issuance of and to sell bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance and sale of the bond herein authorized, including renewals of such notes, is hereby delegated to the Town Supervisor. Such notes shall be of such terms, form and contents, and shall be sold in such manner, as may be prescribed by said Town Supervisor, consistent with the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 7: The faith and credit of said Town of Brighton, Franklin County, New York, are hereby irrevocably pledged for the payment of the principal of and interest on such bond as the same respectively becomes due and payable. All the taxable real property within said Town shall be subject to the levy of ad valorem taxes without limitation as to rate or amount sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on said bond.

Section 8: Such bond shall be in a fully registered form and shall be signed in the name of the Town of Brighton, Franklin County, New York, by the manual or facsimile signature of the Town Supervisor and a facsimile of its corporate seal shall be imprinted thereon and attested by the manual or facsimile signature of the Town Clerk.

Section 9: Said bond shall obligate the Town to pay to the registered owner the principal sum of \$80,000.00 and to pay interest on the unpaid balance of such principal sum at the rate of 1.88% per annum, annually from the date of the bond until it matures.

Section 10: The bond anticipation notes authorized by this resolution may be renewed at the discretion of the Town Board.

Section 11: When said bond shall have been duly sold, the same shall be delivered by the Town of Brighton Town Clerk to the purchaser upon payment to it of the purchase price including accrued interest, and the receipt of the Town of Brighton shall be a full acquittance to said purchaser who shall not be obligated to see to the application of the purchase money.

Section 12: The intent of this resolution is to give the Town Supervisor sufficient authority to execute those agreements, instruments or to do any similar acts necessary to effect the issuance of the aforesaid bonds without resorting to further action of this Town Board.

Section 13: This resolution shall constitute a statement of official intent for purposes of Treasury Regulations Sections 1.150 2(d) and (e). Other than as specified in this resolution, no monies are, or are reasonably expected to be, reserved, allocated on a long-term basis, or otherwise set aside with respect to the permanent funding of the object or purpose described herein.

Section 14: The validity of such bonds and bond anticipation notes may be contested only if:

1. Such obligations are authorized for an object or purpose for which said Town is not authorized to expend money, or
2. The provisions of law which should be complied with at the date of publication of this resolution are not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty (20) days after the date of such publication, or
3. Such obligations are authorized in violation of the provisions of the Constitution.

Section 15: Pursuant to the provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, this Board expressly represents that the Town will not issue more than ten million dollars of tax-exempt obligations in any calendar year and directs that a copy of this Resolution be furnished to the bond purchaser.

Section 16: This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

	YEA	NAY	ABSENT
Supervisor, Robert Tebbutt	VOTING <u> X </u>	_____	_____
John Quenell	VOTING <u> X </u>	_____	_____
Alicia Bodmer	VOTING <u> X </u>	_____	_____
Steven Tucker	VOTING <u> X </u>	_____	_____
Linda Dobson	VOTING <u> X </u>	_____	_____

The resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted. (Resolution #24-2003)

RESOLUTION #25

AUTHORIZATION TO REDEEM THE \$100,000 BAN FROM TUPPER LAKE BANK

WHEREAS, a \$100,000 Bond Anticipation Note issued by the Town of Brighton (Resolution #23-2002) to Tupper Lake National Bank in connection with the purchase of a the 2002 International Dump Truck will mature on February 28, 2003, and

WHEREAS, funds must be raised to redeem the note,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to redeem the \$100,000 note as follows:

1. Issue a new one-year Bond Anticipation Note on February 28, 2003 to Tupper Lake National Bank in the amount of \$80,000 and use the proceeds as partial payment of the \$100,000, and
2. Issue a Highway Fund check charged to Account DA9730.6 for \$20,000 to complete payment of the \$100,000, and
3. Issue a Highway Fund check charged to Account DA9730.7 in the amount of \$2,000 as payment of interest due on the \$100,000 Bond Anticipation Note.

Motion made by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, and second by Linda Dobson, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #25 declared duly adopted.

2. TAX COLLECTOR PETTY CASH FUND:

RESOLUTION #26

AUTHORIZATION TO ALLOW A PETTY CASH FUND FOR TAX COLLECTOR

WHEREAS, the Town Tax Collector has requested that a petty cash fund of \$50 be established for her to make minor payments for materials, supplies and services in advance of audit, and

WHEREAS, Town Law Section 64(1-a) permits the establishment of such a fund for the receiver of taxes not to exceed \$1,000,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to draw a check each January at the Organizational Meeting for \$50 on the General Fund, chargeable to Account A1330.4 and payable to the tax collector, for such use as requested by her, and further, **THAT AS EXPENDITURES ARE MADE** from the fund, the fund is to be replenished to the original \$50 level by documented vouchers submitted at each regular monthly board meeting, and further, **THAT THE FULL \$50 AMOUNT** of the petty cash fund shall be returned to the Supervisor prior to the Tax Collector's making her return to the county treasurer, and further, **THE SUPERVISOR shall issue a receipt for such returned funds.**

Motion made by John Quenell, second by Alicia Bodmer, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #26 declared duly adopted.

3. HIGHWAY GARAGE PROJECT:

- a. **TIME LINE:** A time line has been established for the construction of a new Highway Garage from March 1 to December 31, 2003. A project engineer is needed immediately to start the construction bidding and get permits. There are different types of buildings available and the cost depends on the design and materiel.
- b. **ENGINEER:** Contacted seven engineer firms for quotes and three written quotes were received.

RESOLUTION #27

AUTHORIZATION TO PROCURE SERVICES OF AN ENGINEER FOR THE HIGHWAY GARAGE PROJECT

WHEREAS, in connection with the planned new highway garage project it will be necessary to retain a project engineer to oversee all aspects of the project, including the preparation of a site plan, a building plan for the garage and salt shed, a septic plan, well construction, final plans and specifications, bidding, bid review, and construction, and

WHEREAS, proposals have been received from three professional engineering firms to perform said work as follows:

GARY L WOOD, PE	\$43,500
ROBERT M. SUTHERLAND, PE	\$47,260
NORTH WOODS ENGINEERING, JOE & CINDY GARSO, PEs	\$24,900

And,

WHEREAS, the proposals have been studied by the Supervisor and a Member of Council and

WHEREAS, summaries of the proposals have been made available to and discussed with other members of the town board at its Special Meeting of February 27, 2003, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that North Woods Engineering is to be designated as project engineer for the new highway garage project, who has quoted engineering costs of approximately \$24,900 on the project, subject to adjustment upward or downward for unforeseen changes including but not limited to changes in plans, contractor performance, scope of responsibility, and further that payments for said services be made from the Highway Garage Project Fund.

Motion made by John Quenell, second by Linda Dobson, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #27 declared duly adopted.

- c. **LAND ACQUISITION FOR GARAGE:** Land will be needed to build the new town garage and Paul Smiths College is willing to sell the land behind the current Town Garage. Supervisor Robert Tebbutt met with Dr George Miller on February 21, 2003, and discussed the purchase of this land. The results of this meeting are attached to the resolution in a form of a MEMORANDUM as follows:

**MEMORANDUM OF A MEETING OF ROBERT TEBBUTT AND
PRESIDENT GEORGE MILLER OF PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE**

We met on Friday, February 21, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. at his office at the college. I informed him that we were going to proceed with the purchase of the adjacent property to the present town garage of approximately

four acres. The land is being offered at a price of \$7000 without “building rights.” We would be given an option to purchase “building rights” in the future for an additional \$13,000.

There is to be a 25' buffer provided by the town where no construction, mining or development shall take place. The college will provide an exclusion to the 25' buffer where it cannot be established due to existing sand mine activity.

Permission will also be granted to use adjacent college property for possible remediation of existing mine faces as dictated by involved governmental agencies.

All costs associated with the sale, including but not limited to surveying, recording fees and attorney fees shall be paid by the town. A transparency and several copies of the survey are to be delivered to the college.

We also agreed to formally transfer the town hall property to the town. Again, all costs associated with the transfer are to be borne by the town.

The renewal of the sand mine contract with the college is being put on hold. We discussed the renewal of the town park property lease due in about three years and he felt there was no problem associated with it being renewed.

We further agreed to accomplish these land transfers as quickly as possible and practical.

RGT 2/25/03

RESOLUTION #28

AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE LAND FOR NEW TOWN GARAGE PROJECT

WHEREAS, in connection with the planned new highway garage project it has been deemed desirable for the town to acquire approximately 4.67 acres of land presently owned by Paul Smith’s College that abut the town’s present highway garage land, and

WHEREAS the Town Supervisor and the President of Paul Smith’s College have reached an understanding that the land in question is available for purchase by the town for \$7,000, as described in the attached “Memorandum of a meeting of Robert Tebbutt and President George Miller of Paul Smith’s College,” and

WHEREAS the resultant per-acre price of \$1,500 is consistent with the appraised value made by Border Appraisal Service, retained by the town, of lands at the “Alpo” property of Paul Smith’s College in Gabriels, which the town recently considered as an alternative site for the new highway garage and which land is similar in character to the proposed acquisition, and

WHEREAS it was agreed between the Supervisor and the President that all costs associated with the sale, including but not limited to surveying, attorney fees and recording fees are to be borne by the town,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to proceed with the purchase of the subject land and to expend from the Highway Garage Project Fund amounts required for the purchase price and other costs associated with the purchase of the land

Motion made by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, second by Alicia Bodmer, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #28 declared duly adopted.

d. PREPARATION OF DEED FOR LAND TRANSFER

RESOLUTION #29

AUTHORIZATION TO CONTACT ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN FOR GARAGE LAND DEED

WHEREAS, in connection with the planned new highway garage project it will be necessary to use the services of an attorney in connection with the purchase of Paul Smith’s College lands adjacent to the present highway garage property, and

WHEREAS, Scott Goldie Esq. of Conboy, McKay, Bachman & Kendall LLP, has been appointed as Attorney for the Town,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to request Scott Goldie to represent the town in its planned purchase of said lands.

Motion made by John Quenell, second by Linda Dobson, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #29 declared duly adopted.

e. SURVEY OF LAND FOR PURCHASE

RESOLUTION #30

AUTHORIZATION FOR LAND SURVEYING SERVICES FOR TOWN GARAGE

WHEREAS, in connection with the planned new highway garage project it will be necessary to have a survey prepared in connection with the purchase of Paul Smith’s College lands adjacent to the present highway garage property,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to request land surveyor Christopher Leifheit to perform such survey, at a cost not to exceed \$800, with

payment to be made from the Highway Garage Project Fund upon completion of the work, expected by March 11, 2003.

Motion made by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, second by Alicia Bodmer, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #30 declared duly adopted.

f. DISTRIBUTION OF LETTER TO TOWN CONCERNING NEW TOWN GARAGE PROJECT

RESOLUTION #31

AUTHORIZATION TO DISTRIBUTE LETTER TO TOWN RESIDENTS CONCERNING TOWN GARAGE PROJECT

WHEREAS, in connection with the planned new highway garage project it is deemed desirable for the town at this time to send an explanatory communication by mail to all households in the town,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted, at a cost not to exceed \$250, to the Town Supervisor to cause to be mailed to the approximately 465 postal patrons in the town a letter (attached) describing the reasons for the proposed project, and to make available additional copies of the letter to lake associations in the town who may wish to distribute the letter to their members, predominantly seasonal residents.

Motion made by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, second by Linda Dobson, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #31 declared duly adopted.

4. TOP RIDGE HOLDINGS TAX CERTIORARI:

RESOLUTION #32

AUTHORIZATION TO TRANSFER TAX CERTIORARI MATTER FROM ROBERT WHITE ATTORNEY TO ATTORNEY FOR THE TOWN AND PAY THE BILL

WHEREAS, Robert E. White, Esq., has represented the Town in a tax certiorari matter concerning Top Ridge Holdings since the action was brought in 1995, and

WHEREAS, Mr. White has become aware that the Attorney for the town is now Scott Goldie, Esq. in Canton, and

WHEREAS, by letter to the supervisor dated February 22, 2003 Mr. White has expressed an opinion that the Town would more appropriately be served by its Attorney than outside counsel (explaining that our prior Attorney for the Town, Janet Bliss, had a conflict of interest in the case because a partner of her firm was representing the plaintiff) and because any further hearings in the matter will be held before Judge Demarest, who happens to be located in Canton, and

WHEREAS, in the same correspondence Mr. White has submitted a bill for his services on the matter since June 2, 1998 in the amount of \$435.00 from 2003 funds,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that approval is granted to the Town Supervisor to pass this matter to Attorney for the Town, Scott Goldie, including all pertinent files sent to the Town by Mr. White under date of February 22, 2003, and that Mr. White's bill for \$435.00 for services rendered since June 2, 1998 be paid by the town from 2003 General Funds.

Motion made by John Quenell, second by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #32 declared duly adopted.

5. **HUD ISSUES:** Steve Tucker will take over the HUD Project #94-22 for a discharge of mortgage to make a determination of action for the Board

6. **CITIZENS COMMENTS:** None

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION #33

AUTHORIZATION TO PAY VOUCHERS

Motion made by Robert Tebbutt to authorize the Supervisor to pay the vouchers as listed on the Abstracts as follows:

GENERAL FUND: Abstract #2B for Voucher #68 through and including #73 in the amount of \$2,280.72

HIGHWAY FUND: Abstract #2B for Voucher #24 through and including #26 in the amount of \$2761.14

Second by Alicia Bodmer, Aye 5

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt	Aye
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer	Aye
Linda Dobson	Aye
John Quenell	Aye
Steve Tucker	Aye

Resolution #33 declared duly adopted.

Motion made by Alicia Bodmer **to Adjourn the Special Board Meeting at 7:55 p.m.**, second by John Quenell, Aye 5

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine W. Sater
Brighton Town Clerk

March 3, 2003

To My Fellow Town of Brighton Residents,

As I reach the end of my second month in office, I am impressed by the many demands made on local government, even in a small town like ours. Besides qualified personnel, capable equipment and facilities are needed to provide the level of service we all expect.

One of the most important services provided by our town government is the maintenance of town roads by our Highway Department. To do the job, they need not only good equipment but also a clean, safe and functional facility to house and maintain it. Every town has one of these — it's called a highway garage. And the purpose of this letter is to discuss the Brighton highway garage with you.

Background

As you may know, about a year ago the Brighton town board began preliminary planning for a new garage. Their thinking was that the logical site would be on the present highway garage property. Regrettably, initial groundwater tests disclosed a contamination problem involving both salt and petroleum. The board had no choice but to suspend planning activities for a new structure until more information was gathered about the extent and severity of the contamination problem.

The Department of Environmental Conservation asked the town to construct an impervious surface on which to store its road salt and to install groundwater monitoring wells and make periodic reports on groundwater contaminants. We have complied with these requests.

Much to our relief, on the basis of the testing results so far, the groundwater contamination appears to be diminishing. Indications are, although it can't be guaranteed, we will not have to remediate the soil in the highway garage area. This also suggests that we would be able to construct a new highway garage on the present garage site.

What I have found

As a newcomer to the board in January, I admit that I had doubts over the need for a new building. Therefore, I have made it a top priority to understand the situation. In particular, in my role as chief financial officer for the town, it is critically important to determine whether there exists sufficient justification for such a major undertaking.

Here is what I have found. The present highway garage, constructed about 50 years ago, is indeed ready for replacement. It is too small to adequately house and protect all of our equipment. It is very expensive and difficult to heat, particularly in years of unusual cold such as we are now experiencing. Major roof repairs are needed. Because of its age and condition, the building is not even a safe environment for our highway employees. I am enclosing a page of photos taken just a few weeks ago to help illustrate these conditions.

In July of 2001 our insurance carrier inspected the highway garage and made the following report describing the garage as a critical problem:

CRITICAL - Garage - Structural problems exist at the garage which should be corrected or the garage should be relocated. The integrity of the existing garage is compromised with the condition of the west wall presenting a collapse potential. Given the cost of replacing this wall as well as the cost of replacing an antiquated heating system in the building, and installing a fire detection and alarm system, it is suggested that plans to construct a new facility be pursued. The net effect would be a new and structurally sound facility with these systems already installed at a more cost effective means.

The decision before us is whether to replace the highway garage, as suggested by the insurance company, with a safe, efficient and adequate new structure that should last for another 50 years, or try to repair and nurse along the existing building for a few more years. The town board unanimously agrees that we should proceed with the replacement alternative.

Some thoughts about town offices

As part of my "education" over the past two months I have visited many other towns in the region to see what they have done to upgrade their highway garage facilities. Besides learning about garage design and construction, I have been impressed by the fact that many towns have outgrown their town office buildings and are solving the problem by making room for town offices in their new highway buildings. Economically this makes sense because once you decide to put up a highway garage, to make it a little larger to accommodate other town offices is very economical.

Here in Brighton, our overcrowded one-room town hall houses the supervisor, code enforcement officer, town clerk, town justice, tax collector, and assessor. There are no separate offices, but there should be — especially for the clerk, judge, tax collector and assessor. The limited open space that remains after allowing for desks, tables, filing cabinets and office equipment has to serve as the board meeting room, the court room and the food pantry room. There is one bathroom and a water system that pumps non-drinkable water. Architecturally, the town hall is a fine building and one that we should be proud of, but I believe that as part of our planning for a new highway garage we need to also consider transferring some or all of our town office functions to the new building.

Why now?

There are many good reasons to pursue the idea of a new highway garage now. As a fellow taxpayer, I know you are wondering what will it cost, who pays for it and how, and can we afford it? We have much more work to do, but our best guess at this time is that the project would cost between \$450,000 and \$550,000. This would be the entire cost, including site preparation, a new garage, a sand and salt shed, septic facilities, a new water well, environmental engineering, project engineering, and architectural and design costs. It is important to note that many of the costs are fixed regardless of the size of the building. In fact, design and engineering costs along with pollution-related expenses have to be incurred before we can even apply for a permit to build.

Although we will do our best to find grant money to support the project, we are not optimistic that any substantial support will be found. Therefore most if not all of the project expense would be borne by the taxpayers.

We would likely want to finance the project over a number of years, just as many homeowners do by means of obtaining a mortgage. A town cannot mortgage its facilities, but it can structure financing such as serial bonds that will behave the same way. If the bonds were structured to cover a period of twenty years, a fixed annual payment of interest and principal could be made to retire the bonds in that timeframe. For example, if the total project cost were \$500,000 with an annual interest rate of 4.75%, the yearly expense to the town would be \$39,275. This would represent an increase in the town tax rate of about 34 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation (34¢ per \$1,000). If a property is assessed at \$50,000, the increased tax burden would be \$17 a year. It should be noted, however, that some of that ongoing \$39,275 cost would be offset by expected savings in heating costs and very high repair and maintenance expenses on the existing garage. We just had to buy a new supply of wood for our wood furnace at the highway garage along with 1,000 gallons of fuel oil used in the past 35 days.

If we put off this project, the costs will only soar. Interest rates will not stay this low forever and construction costs will increase annually. Our consultants tell us that an anticipated decrease in municipal building projects this year has building manufacturers and construction companies bidding at record low levels.

If this project is approved and built, complete with a transfer of town offices, the current historical town hall could be restored and used as a community center. We welcome your thoughts about this and/or other potential uses.

Summary

It seems that with very low interest rates coupled with very competitive prices on materials and construction costs, now is an opportune time to undertake this project. It is not a question of whether we need a new garage, it is a question of timing and that seems to be in our favor right now. The projected timeline, if we are aggressive, is to have a new garage by the 2003-2004 plowing season. We are hoping for support from all of our citizens. Please get involved — we value the help our citizens have given the town board in the past and I am sure we can count on continued input in the future. Please contact me or anyone on the board with your questions and comments.

Incidentally, we are placing a page on our new town website that will keep you informed about the highway garage project. For starters, you will be able to see this letter on the site, and we will be adding bulletins regarding ongoing developments. The website address is <http://townofbrighton.net>.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Tebbutt, Supervisor
supervisor@townofbrighton.net