

A **Regular Meeting** of the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt was conducted on November 20, 2012 in the Vincent F. Nyberg Meeting Room of the Cortlandt Town Hall located at One Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, NY (10567) with the following elected official and appointed staff in attendance:

<b>LINDA D. PUGLISI</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
<b>FRANCIS X. FARRELL</b>	<b>Councilmember</b>
<b>ANN LINDAU-MARTIN</b>	<b>Councilmember</b>
<b>RICHARD BECKER</b>	<b>Councilmember</b>
<b>JOHN E. SLOAN</b>	<b>Councilmember</b>

Also present:

<b>JO-ANN DYCKMAN</b>	<b>Town Clerk</b>
<b>EDWARD VERGANO</b>	<b>DOTS, Director</b>
<b>CLAUDIA VAHEY</b>	<b>Human Resources Coordinator</b>
<b>JUDITH HERMESCH</b>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>ROSEMARY B. LASHER</b>	<b>DOTS/Asst. to Director</b>
<b>JEFFREY COLEMAN</b>	<b>Director, DES</b>

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Supervisor Puglisi called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

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**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

Supervisor Puglisi led all in attendance in a Pledge to the Flag.

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**SUPERVISOR’S PROCLAMATIONS AND REPORTS**

**Supervisor Puglisi** spoke of the very special Veteran’s Day ceremony held at Town Hall with over 300 attendees. She asked that residents watch the event on their computers or on the public access station of Channel 78 and thanked the Veterans for their service.

The **Supervisor** called upon Daniel Cunningham and Emerson Alcott from the Blue Mountain Middle School and told how, at the school, Daniel used the Heimlich Maneuver on his friend Emerson and saved his life. She asked him how he knew how to do this procedure and Daniel answered that he learned it from his brother. **Supervisor Puglisi** presented Daniel with a proclamation from the Town.

**Supervisor Puglisi** spoke of Hurricane Sandy on October 29<sup>th</sup> and the devastation it left behind. There were almost 5000 homes in the Town of Cortlandt that lost power and it took almost 2 weeks to get everyone restored. The **Supervisor** has voiced her outrage over this delay. For the first few days the magnitude was understood; all of the crews led by Jeff Coleman surveyed the damage and the next morning schools were closed, power was out with all the trees and wires down. As the time continued and only 1/3 of homes were restored by Con Ed, it became an unbelievable crisis. It took 2 weeks for that power to be restored which was unacceptable.

**Supervisor Puglisi** and Jeff Coleman attended a meeting with all the elected officials and appointed DPW officials at Con Edison and when asked for comments, **Supervisor Puglisi** stated that the response time was too slow, the communication was not good enough, and that Con Edison did not pre-plan properly to get outside crews in for assistance. The problem was that the Town workers were not permitted to touch the wires, and that was the main problem. **Supervisor Puglisi** requested that there be an action plan put in place so this doesn’t happen again and asked that she be a part of a task force and make improvements. She invited FEMA representatives to be present at the Town Board meeting and introduced **Kevin Hannes**, the Branch 3 Director for FEMA.

Mr. Hannes complemented the **Supervisor** on the coordination between the communities which was impressive. He stated that FEMA brings assistance to individuals and that residents need to register with FEMA online, by calling 800-621-3362 , or by going to the

**SUPERVISOR’S REPORTS, (cont.)**

Disaster Recovery Center at the Westchester County Center. FEMA is not intended to make residents whole; it is intended to be a supplemental to their own personal insurance, to make the home habitable til it is repaired with their insurance. Other charities are also involved and individuals from the Department of Labor are present to help for advice for loss of income. Individuals may also be eligible for assistance under the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program for losses of food. Mr. Hannes emphasized that the important thing is for residents to contact their insurance company and to contact and register at FEMA.

For the Town there is the infrastructure repair program to which the Town has applied. Mr. Hennes indicated that they are looking to streamline the process and reduce bureaucracy to make the process easier. He spoke of changes at FEMA regarding payment for picking up of debris and other payment assistance to help with costs of the Town and that his direction was to help quickly and do it right. Mr. Hennes introduced members of the small business administration to discuss their programs and what they could do for homeowners, renters and local businesses.

**Bradford Coldwell**, public relation specialist for the small business administration then spoke of the services provided by this organization by offering low interest disaster loans. There are a number of different programs for different types of impact to businesses due to disasters and to homeowners and renters for property and automobiles. He urged residents to apply by registering with FEMA first and receive an application either at the website or to call at 800-659-2955.

Mr. Hennes added that it is the resiliency of the communities and the leadership and what the citizens are doing to take care of each other that is important and that FEMA is just part of the team that makes this recovery work. He stated that they will be here as long as they are needed. **Supervisor Puglisi** thanked him and she recommended the residents to go on their website to get assistance.

**Supervisor Puglisi** commented that there were many emergency service providers involved in this storm and aftermath and that we are very blessed to have these terrific people to help us. She stated that the comments made are two-fold; one is the critique of the utility company and the other is how can we work together to improve it to make it better for the citizens.

The **Supervisor** went to the ribbon cutting ceremony at a new store that opened in the community, Big Lots, which provides about 60 jobs for the community. This was the former Circuit City location which was in bankruptcy court.

**Supervisor Puglisi** wished everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving, and that she is very thankful there were no serious injuries or loss of life due to the recent storm.

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**ROLL CALL**

On a roll call attendance taken by Town Clerk Dyckman all Town Board members indicated their presence.

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**TOWN BOARD REPORTS**

**Councilmember Farrell:** Reflected on the storm, commenting that it was quite the sobering event. Councilmember Farrell stated that he was very fortunate in his home and didn't lose power, but he heard the reports of the devastation in his community and how people were losing their homes in the trailer park and on the river. It seemed that a lot of the Town's services proceeded normally in the lead up to the storm and a lot of preparations were being made, such as sand bags, shelters, etc. He noted that the capricious nature of the storm was strange, some people never lost power and some were

**TOWN BOARD REPORTS, (cont.)**

without a long time. Councilmember Farrell credited Jeff Coleman and his staff, the Supervisor and everyone who worked so hard for many hours to give their assistance. The cooperation amongst the entities was remarkable and commendable. Councilmember Farrell stated that he learned that many times backup equipment fails almost 30% of the time and how the Town was able to borrow a generator to correct a sewer pumping issue.

Leading up to the storm was a presidential election and Councilmember Farrell commented that this election revealed a deep, profound and evenly split divide in our country and that the choices couldn't be more diametrically opposed, yet people who were at odds came together to try to provide for the restoration of the community, proving the willingness of people pulling together and work for each other when needed. Councilmember Farrell has realized that whatever it is that divides or challenges us, we have within us the ability to meet it and to overcome it.

**Councilmember Lindau-Martin:** Also complemented the Supervisor and staff for their work during the storm and this does show that we can pull together. She also thanked FEMA and The SBA for attending this evening. Councilmember Lindau-Martin and the Supervisor had attended a conference on climate change and the economic development of the Hudson and it was interesting because it was after the hurricane and they had spoken about the density and the fury of the potential storms.

**Councilmember Becker:** Regarding the resolution to authorize a letter to be forwarded to NY State Power and Service commission in respect to Con Edison's slow recovery to power, Councilmember stated that he is not sure about Con Edison's performance. When he thinks of the extent of the damage he understands but if this had been further into the winter with colder weather, there could have been deaths in the community. Two weeks is a very long time when you are cold. Councilmember Becker stated that he thinks his displeasure with Con Edison comes with a certain reluctance on their part to examine what they did and how they did it, and what could be done differently. FEMA has done a better job since the criticism of Katrina and he doesn't see that same interest on the part of Con Edison to self examine. He suggested ways that could be preventative so that there is not such a wide scale of damages. There is so much that can be looked at and done better next time, so he is supporting the Supervisor with her letter to Con Edison.

The Supervisor stated that she also suggested at the meeting that they come back now into the community and assess the utility poles.

**Councilmember Sloan:** stated that he was optimistic going forward and his belief is that after the fiscal cliff America will enter into a much more positive framework. He feels that both parties are looking for compromise and cooperation and it will be a good New Year's Eve. There were a few new store openings in Cortlandt which are very encouraging economic trends. Councilmember Sloan stated that he would not be voting for the resolution with regard to Con Edison because these are emotions, not criteria, and there are no standards for comparison. He is surprised that con Edison did the kind of job it did in only two weeks instead of taking two weeks and feels that Cortlandt should take a more positive attitude and not issue this type of proclamation.

Supervisor Puglisi commented that she respectfully disagreed with him and named reasons why, comparing Con Edison with NYSG&E. She thinks Con Edison is a monopoly and should be divided up to service all the consumers. Supervisor Puglisi stated that her issues are with top management and that they did not listen to all the local municipalities from their last meeting.

Councilmember Sloan added that he does think there is a lot of discussion that can be had after these kind of storms to find better ways to address the problems directly and very

**TOWN BOARD REPORTS, (cont.)**

innovative ideas could come out of it, but not by reaching back to the typical response that because we had such devastation for a long time, therefore there must be a villain.

The **Supervisor** referred to her 5 page report where she laid out the steps constructively that need to be taken before and during the storm , it's restoration and recovery, and then the assessment of the damage. Also what went wrong and what needs to be improved was stated and how to improve it together. Con Edison needs to do better and those at the front lines know how they can do better and they must listen.

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**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Councilmember Sloan moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 16, 2012 be approved as presented by Town Clerk Dyckman. Councilmember Becker seconded the motion.

All voted **AYE**

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**None**

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**HEARING OF CITIZENS, (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

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**BID REPORTS**

**None**

**REPORTS**

Councilmember Becker moved that the following reports be received and ordered filed. Councilmember Lindau- Martin seconded the motion.

For the month of June from the Recreation and Conservation Department.

For the month of October from the Office for the Aging, the Purchasing Department, the Receiver of Taxes, and the Town Clerk.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Receive and File the Following:**

1. Quarterly report from Westchester County with respect to the Sprout Brook Ashpit.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Receive and File the Following:**

Letter from the clerk of the ZBA with respect to amending the Table of Permitted Uses to include Academic Tutoring; and refer to the Law Department.

All voted **AYE**

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**RESOLUTIONS**

(All resolutions adopted at this meeting are to be found attached to the end of the original document.)

Councilmember Lindau- Martin moved that the following resolutions be adopted, seconded by Councilmember Farrell:

**RESOLUTION NO.202-12 RE: Authorize the instillation of an additional water meter and policy with respect to same as amended**

**RESOLUTION NO.203-12 RE: Authorize an amendment to an existing contract with Woodard & Curran GIS services to include tax map updating.**

**RESOLUTION NO.204-12 RE: Authorize the correction of an assessment due to a clerical error.**

**RESOLUTION NO.205-12 RE: Authorize DES and DOTS to evaluate Watch Hill Road and Furnace Woods Road for traffic calming solutions especially in the area of schools.**

**RESOLUTION NO.206-12 RE: Authorize DES and DOTS to evaluate drainage/flooding issues on Montrose Station Road in the area of Rt. 9A and the firehouse.**

**RESOLUTION NO.207-12 RE: Authorize the Town to apply to FEMA for reimbursement for all Town hurricane storm damage and recovery expenses.**

**Discussion:** Supervisor Puglisi stated that a resident contacted her office regarding looking at ways to calm down traffic on Watch Hill Road and the Town is extending that to Furnace Woods road also. Department heads will be giving recommendations.

**All voted AYE**

Councilmember Lindau-Martin moved that the Town Board be polled seconded by Councilmember Becker

**RESOLUTION NO.208-12 RE: Authorize a letter to be forwarded to the NYS PSC with respect to Con Edison's slow recovery of power to residents after Hurricane Sandy.**

Councilmember Farrell stated that he respectfully disagreed with Councilmember Sloan's intended vote. He finds troubling that the CEO is earning 12 million dollars a year and what is someone like this doing for that salary. When wires come down, volunteer firefighters have to stay with the lines for sometimes 8-10 hours until someone from Con Edison shows up to take care of it. Very often they don't have the manpower to address it in a timely manner and volunteers who are not getting paid have to mind the equipment for safety of the public. This is due to a reduction of the staff by Con Edison. The manpower should be in place and there should be an effort to see what Con Edison should be doing better. Councilmember Farrell commented that those that are overpaid clearly are not doing their job, so he is in full support of this resolution.

Councilmember Sloan suggested that the resolution be changed to objecting the salary of the CEO, he would vote for that.

Supervisor Puglisi added that the CEO was not present at the meeting where all the municipalities were represented, and that he should have been there. The Supervisor also vowed that she would make sure that rates are not increased.

**RESOLUTIONS, (cont.)**

**The Board was polled:**

- Councilmember Becker:** Yes
- Councilmember Sloan:** No
- Supervisor Puglisi:** Yes
- Councilmember Lindau-Martin:** Yes
- Councilmember Farrell:** Yes

The motion was **passed**

Councilmember Lindau- Martin moved that the following resolutions be adopted, seconded by Councilmember Farrell:

**RESOLUTION NO.209-12 RE: Schedule a Public Hearing for December 11, 2012 to consider increasing the number of PRC Advisory Board members.**

**Discussion:** Supervisor Puglisi stated that there are interested people that want to serve on this volunteer board so there will be a public hearing on that regard.

All voted **AYE**

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Councilmember Farrell moved that the following be received and filed and the following resolutions be adopted. Councilmember Sloan seconded the motion.

**Receive and File the Following:**

1. Receive and File bids opened on October 12, 2012 with respect to the continental Village waterline replacement; and Award a Contract with respect to same.

**RESOLUTION NO. 210-12 RE: Award a contract with respect to the Continental Village waterline replacement.**

2. Receive and File Acadia Petition for a Zoning Map Amendment on Rt. 6; and refer to the Legal Department and DOTS.
3. Letter from Paul Fox with respect to an adjoining property owner notification; and refer to DOTS/Code Enforcement.

**RESOLUTIONS**

(All resolutions adopted at this meeting are to be found attached to the end of the original document.)

**RESOLUTION NO. 211-12 RE: Appoint Carol Pergola to a part-time Nutrition Driver position.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 212-12 RE: Authorize Teamsters Local 456 Contract and Employment Agreements for 2012-2013 and set managerial salary schedule.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 213-12 RE: Authorize the Supervisor to execute a contract with respect to Information Technology Services.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 214-12 RE: Authorize the cancellation of certain tax liens and water bills on In-Rem properties.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 215-12 RE: Authorize the purchase of a front end loader and amend the highway budget with respect to same.**

All Voted **AYE**

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**BUDGET TRANSFERS**

**None**

**REPORTS FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS**

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**REPORTS FROM STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

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**SECOND HEARING OF CITIZENS**

**Bill Higgins**

**223 Furnace Dock Road**

Spoke on behalf of his neighbors in his area that the biggest problem that they had in their area beside the power being out was that a lot of the dead end streets were not accessible to services due to trees down, tangled wires, etc. They agree that the response time to the Town of Cortlandt was not adequate and wants to suggest that before the next emergency strikes that discussions are held regarding how to improve the efforts and find legal avenues to address these shortcomings.

Mr. Higgins noted that neighboring towns had listings on the website as to where the problems were and what was being done to address it. This communication was not given by the Town or a place to find this information and he hoped that there could be a central location to get information.

The Supervisor stated that they had "Code Red" calls, but, of course, many were without being able to use their phones. She said they were counting on the liaison for Con Edison for information but he also wasn't getting the updates.

Mr. Higgins made suggestions for improvements and asked that the Town lead Con Edison rather than Con Edison lead them. He offered to give his assistance in any future meetings to discuss and formulate improvements.

Councilmember Lindau-martin stated that perhaps some paper distribution or loud speaker communication could be established. Jeff Coleman added that the county police and radio stations did try to do that. Supervisor Puglisi stated that updates were given to the radio stations as well as the 2500 email subscribers to the Town.

**Kathleen Corrigan**

**18 Inwood Lane West**

Spoke of her issues with Con Edison regarding fallen trees on her road for 10 days. She asked if there was a way for the Town to talk to Con Ed as they were not listening to them. They called everyday for 10 days and no one came to restore the wires on the tree.

Jeff Coleman spoke of the liaison program and provide the Town with information and that it worked very well for many years, but it has fallen apart since.

Supervisor Puglisi stated that for the first three or four days Con Edison only had 1-2 crews for the 35,000 residents and that this was absurd.

Ms. Corrigan also noted that many out-of-town crews didn't know how to get to the addresses they were looking for. The Supervisor commented that the out of town crews didn't even come into our area til about four or five days after the storm and that they should be brought in early, trained and given the street maps.

**HEARING OF CITIZENS, cont.**

Councilmember Becker stated that he has heard good critiques and suggestions so there needs to be an analysis of what happened. The out-of-town workers also needed to find places to stay while they were doing their job also, and all this needs to be worked out in advance.

Ms. Corrigan also stated that maybe people don't realize it but Con Edison assumes you have power unless you call them. She suggested that the Town gets the word out that everyone has to call in if they have no power.

In summary, the Supervisor stated that she is going to follow up on her suggestion about having these small groups comprised of selected officials and DPW people and citizens that actually lived through it. Con Edison needs to come back and assess areas that were hit to see how the poles have been damaged.

Councilmember Becker added that all the information that was on the website is all the information that they had, that nothing was held back. They had no idea where the crews were going.

Supervisor Puglisi said that all the municipal officials were saying the same thing.

**John DeBenedictus**  
**Westminister Drive**

Mr. DeBenedictus kiddinglly stated that there are two problems, a Con Edison problem and a sugar problem with Twinkies and Devil Dogs no longer around.

He continued to comment that Con Edison is poorly run, archaic equipment, its distribution system is old, but the thing is that they don't care because they don't have to. He feels the most important thing to do is to go after the Public Service Commission and the people who are elected that appoint them because it is all about money.

The Supervisor added that in order to get to the heart of the problem they have to tell the Regulatory commission what is going on here. Con Edison has a large consumer base and we have to compete with this mega company. She invited the residents to leave their information in order to set up a group in the Town of Cortlandt to discuss this and go collectively to the County and Con Edison. Supervisor Puglisi added that the County has been terrific with their assistance.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. on motion of Councilmember Becker and Councilmember Lindau-Martin.

All voted **AYE**

Respectfully submitted,

**JO-ANN DYCKMAN,**  
**Town Clerk**