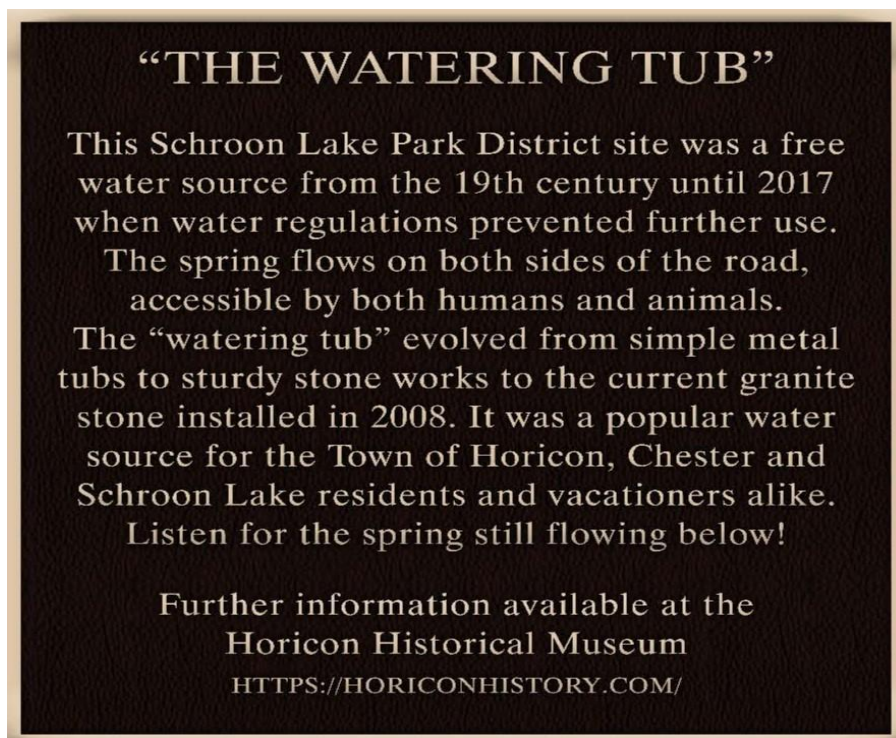


Watering Tub Historic Plaque Background

In 2024, Town Councilman John Francisco, at Town of Horicon Board meeting, discussed the importance of preserving the Watering Tub on Watering Tub Road in Brant Lake. The Watering Tub is situated on land owned by the Schroon Lake Park District, and there was concern (subsequently unfounded) that the District wanted to remove the watering tub. Through Town Board meetings in 2024 and 2025 and discussions with the Horicon Historical Society, various options were explored, including moving the watering tub to the Horicon Historical Museum. After considering the costs and difficulties of moving the large stone and finding that the Schroon Lake Park District had no intention of moving the Watering Tub, it was agreed that the best option would be to leave the watering tub in place and to memorialize its importance to many residents and visitors in the area with a Historic Plaque.

The Horicon Historical Society investigated the background and evolution of this Watering Tub, which uncovered very scant information and is documented in this article. Through a generous grant from the Community Fund for the Gore Mountain Region of the Adirondack Community Foundation and a donation from the Brant Lake Farmer's Market collected from its customers, the Horicon Historical Society will erect the plaque in November 2026, shown below, for all to remember, and enjoy.



What's a Watering Tub?

A watering tub and trough were essential civic and agricultural fixtures, situated along rural roads or in town squares, to provide drinking water for horses, livestock and travelers. These fixtures were often spring fed, sometimes through a pipe, into a metal tub or stone trough. These water catch basins would be low enough to allow use by the livestock (horses and oxen) which were the main transportation of the day. And sometimes a pipe was provided for more convenient water access by the wagon drivers and travelers. These watering tubs evolved in the 20th century to be a source more for humans than animals as cars and trucks replaced the animal-drawn carriages.

Residents and seasonal visitors would often use well-sourced and high-quality spring water as a main or supplemental source of drinking water for residences and camps. This was especially useful during low-water seasons or during winter freezing weather when traditional water sources could be problematic. This practice continues where the watering tub's water source still proves to be hygienic and not contaminated with local pollutants as development encroaches on the water sources.

Watering Tub on Watering Tub Road

This Schroon Lake Park District site, purchased from Finch, Prynne in 1954, was a free water source from the 19th century until 2017 when water regulations prevented further use. The pipe that fed the tub was removed in 2018. The spring flows from the north side of the road and was likely the original location of the watering tub. Sometime in the 20th century, the watering tub location was moved to the current location, on the south side of the road, where it was more easily accessible to "non-farm animal" clients. This current version was created by stone mason Blair Gregson from stone extracted from the Horicon Town landfill and installed in 2008. On a well-travelled by-way with a close-by stream with a strong waterflow, it proved a popular water source for the Towns of Horicon, Chester and Schroon Lake residents and vacationers. The spring can still be heard running underneath the site.



This is the earliest photograph that we have of the watering tub on Watering Tub Rd. It was taken around 1955 and shows Horicon resident Bryce Johnson drinking out of the pipe which fed this tub. It was a metal container within a concrete drainage pipe – not the most attractive but it certainly did the job. Tim Meade remembers his mother providing the metal container for this version of the watering tub.



This is the next iteration of the watering tub. The photograph was taken around 1965 and shows Brant Lake resident Bob Newton with children Sherry, Betty, Todd and Greta hiding behind Todd. This is a stone facing watering tub, possibly with a metal container liner for the water. Barbara French remembers her father, Albert Monroe, repairing this structure.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE FUNDS FOR BROCHURES

RESOLVED, that the Town Board does hereby authorize the expenditure of \$2,000.00 to the North Warren Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of generating 2 tourist-type cards (brochures). One thousand dollars to be spent making a card for just Horicon and the other thousand to be spent on a joint venture with the Town of Chester.

Hill-aye, Higgins-aye, Olson-aye, Hayes-aye, Bentley-aye

The discussion then shifted to the lack of a store in Horicon. Mr. Johansen said the Chamber of Commerce stands by willing to help in any way get a store here. Councilman Higgins said Warren County Planner Laura Moore said they have had no "bites" so far regarding a store here. Supervisor Bentley said he spoke recently with John Palermo and someone interested in opening a store at the old Town Hall property.

East Shore Schroon Lake Association request for pathway- Discussion regarding whether pathway should be placed in front or on side of lawn. Need to be careful not to block access to firehouse in any way. Councilman Hill will speak to Bill McGhie personally and let him know the Board is trying to decide how to make the pathway.

OLD BUSINESS-

Watering tub repair- Blair Gregson came by the meeting to present his idea for the repair of the watering tub. He said he had looked over where the stones were missing and the whole design in general. Mr. Gregson said the present design is "proper" and should be carried over to a tub design. Mr. Gregson added that when he tested the inside of the present structure he found it was "mush". Mr. Gregson's plan would be to use a big rock and carve out the center into a bowl affect. He would not change the height and would keep things to the same scale. There would be no seams and no cement, just the natural rock made smooth and a bowl carved into the top. There would be a hole bored for the drain and the pipe would not move. The rock would be about 6-7 foot round. Mr. Gregson offered to pick out a stone and invite the Board to come and see it. Councilman Hill said we should do this. Councilman Higgins asked about the possibility of having two smaller rock/tubs so more people could get water at the same time. Mr. Gregson said that could probably be done. Councilman Hill asked if there was a "ballpark" figure for the project and Mr. Gregson said somewhere around \$5,000. The Board asked Mr. Gregson to let them know when he had a rock picked out.

Warren County Draft for Proposal- The Board reviewed the few additions and suggestions the Planning Board had for the draft proposal and agreed to send the changes to Laura Moore at the County so she can incorporate them into the final proposal. When the proposal is in final form the Town Board will review and then we can go out for "RFP's" on the project.

Dog Shelter- The Town currently has no contract for sheltering dogs that are picked up by our dog warden. The clerk has been in contact with Glens Falls Animal Shelter and they are willing to contract with the Town for \$12-\$14 per dog per day for room and board. They will hold a dog for 5 days and if not claimed the dog will be euthanized at Town expense. The State Department of Agriculture and Markets has the Town on notice that we must have a shelter for dogs. It was previously discussed that a shelter could possibly be built at the dog warden's home, but there are liability issues with doing that.

At a Horicon Town Board Meeting on May 17, 2007, the Town Board discussed the need for a replacement watering tub due to extensive deterioration of the current structure. Blair Gregson presented his plan to replace it with a big rock, make it smooth and carve out the center into a bowl effect. Such a design would have no seams and no cement, thus greatly reducing maintenance repairs over time.

Town of Horicon

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Update from Ralph Bentley, Town Supervisor—Images Around Town
- New Businesses in Town:
 - ❖ Don Butler—Brant Lake Taxi and Transportation Service
 - ❖ Laurie Hughes—"Getting in Touch" massage therapy
- Comprehensive Master Plan Update Status

Copies of the newsletter are available at Town Hall, in the public libraries of Brant Lake, Adirondack hamlets, and on line at our web site: www.horiconny.gov.

From the Office of Supervisor Ralph Bentley:

Two Thousand Eight started off busy and promises to continue the same way. Some projects begun last year are completed or scheduled for completion in the next few months.

- *New gate installation for the lower dam on Mill Pond is waiting at Warren County D.P.W. for the pond level to lower.*
- *Wing wall repair on upper dam on Mill Pond was completed last fall and awaits site repaving and guardrails.*
- *Assessment Re-val program is now completed. Tax rates decrease; new assessment values should reflect new rates of less than \$10.00 per thousand, which includes School, County, Town and Fire Tax.*
- *Horicon Museum Expansion—The Historical Society building project to expand the Carriage House is in the works in order to exhibit more donated memorabilia.*

New Watering Tub—The watering tub was replaced due to the internal crumbling of the stonework. Over the years it has been repaired many times, but could no longer be fixed. The "home grown" boulder was carved by Blair Gregson.

New Highway Garage—Is completed and within budget. Comments from employees and visitors alike have been very favorable.

Community Development Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Master Plan—Is moving ahead with the Adirondack Community Smart Growth Reimbursement Grant for \$23,000 awarded to the Town for the downtown revitalization plan. The Town of Horicon is working with the Laberge Group to complete the Community Development Strategic Plan in June. A Technical Assistance Grant of \$25,000 is being used to fund development and completion of the Comprehensive Master Plan.



New Town Garage

Photo by Carl Hellman

.....Continued on Page 2

The Board agreed to the proposal and Blair Gregson made the current watering tub from granite extracted from the Horicon Town Landfill. It was installed in the spring of 2008.

NOVEMBER 14, 2017
7:00 PM

**HORICON TOWN BOARD
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING**

RESOLUTION #154-2017
Councilperson Hill and Councilperson Olson introduced Res. No. 154 and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT BOARD OF ETHICS ALTERNATE
RESOLVED, that the Horicon Town Board does hereby appoint Mary Paton as Town of Horicon Board of Ethics Alternate Member to fill the term expiring on December 31, 2018.

Ayes: 5 (Olson, Smith, Hill, Higgins, Simpson) Nays: 0

Ernest Smith Rd bridge: Supervisor Simpson reminded the Board there is an opportunity to apply for grant funding for a permanent bridge on Ernest Smith Road. He said this would require an investment on the Town's part for an engineer, but the Town would have to spend money on an engineer anyway. HS Granger said the process will be lengthy so if the Board wants to do this he would recommend moving forward now. The Board agreed and advised Supervisor Simpson to pursue the grant opportunity.

Watering Tub: Supervisor Simpson explained the water test for the Watering Tub tested positive for E. Coli. He said there is nothing the Town can do, and he is not willing to take the chance on someone getting sick. Councilperson Olson said there is no way to maintain this. The Board agreed the **Watering Tub is officially permanently closed for the safety of those that use it.**

Adirondack Schoolhouse: Supervisor Simpson said the Horicon Fire Department voted recently to subdivide their property in Adirondack. He said this would allow the Town to take ownership of the Schoolhouse and could then secure funding to rehabilitate the building. He said he feels it is a good project to pursue, and suggested the Board hold a series of public hearings to get feedback from the community. Councilperson Olson expressed concern over the amount of work the building needs, and said he would like to see the Union Church project completed first. Councilperson Olson said it could be added to upcoming Agenda's to discuss the pros and cons of the undertaking.

New Business...

Centralized Arraignments: Supervisor Simpson explained that Warren County is in the process of creating a centralized arraignment program. He said the law now requires a public defender to be present at all arraignments, and the County does not have enough public defenders to meet this requirement. He said the County has devised a plan where all arraignments would happen at the Warren County Municipal Center twice a day. Supervisor Simpson noted State funding will be available to cover expenses the Justices incur for travel.

RESOLUTION #155-2017

Councilperson Hill and Councilperson Olson introduced Res. No. 155 and moved its adoption:

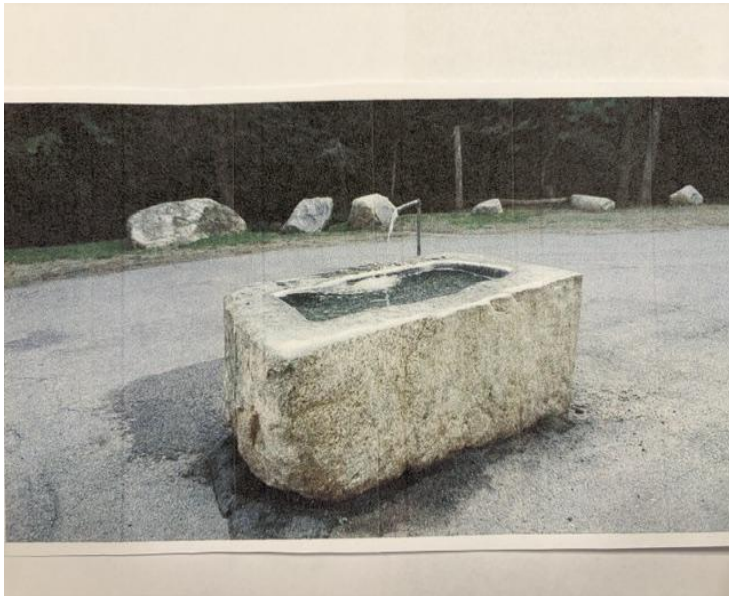
RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT WARREN COUNTY'S PROPOSED PLAN FOR COUNSEL AT INITIAL APPEARANCE FOR ARRAIGNMENTS IN LOCAL COURTS

WHEREAS, Warren County is submitting a plan for counsel at initial appearance coverage for arraignments in local courts, and
WHEREAS, the plan provides for a central arraignment part conducted twice a day at the Warren County Municipal Center rather than at the town or city location of the arrest, and
WHEREAS, this plan requires the cooperation of the various local town and city justices and judges, and
WHEREAS, this plan should assure consistency in representation, as well as in the after hours schedules of the various town and city justices and judges, and
WHEREAS, State funding is available to provide for the expenses of the justices and judges as they travel to Queensbury, and

In November 2017, the Watering Tub was permanently closed by the Horicon Town Board due to positive testing for E. Coli in the water. Because there was not a feasible solution for the Town to correct this problem, they did not want to risk the exposure of someone falling sick due to the contaminated water. A sign was posted indicating the water was not potable, and the watering tub was permanently closed. The pipe that fed the tub was removed. It was the end of a long history of being a well-loved water source.

The Current Watering Tub

The current watering tub, now retired, stands on Watering Tub Road for all to enjoy and imagine what life was like in the early days of the townships. Images are shown below.



Other Watering Tubs in Town of Horicon

Another watering tub existed on Route 8 in the Town of Horicon, on Abel Crook's property towards the northeastern end of Brant Lake. It had a spring house on the eastern side of the road (which finally collapsed around 2015) and the watering trough was on the western side of the road. The spring can still be heard running continually under Route 8 into Brant Lake. A watering tub also existed on Dorset Rd by the intersection with Pumpkin Hollow Rd

Does anyone have pictures of the watering tub on Watering Tub Road that pre-dates 1955 that you can share with us, along with any information you have about the photo? Or pictures of other watering tubs in the Town of Horicon? Please send to horiconhistory@gmail.com with your name and contact information. We will share the relevant information on this website.