

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting  
Minutes of August 16, 2010

The regular meeting of the Village of Owego Board of Trustees was held on Monday, August 16, 2010 at 20 Elm Street, Owego, NY, starting at 7:00 p.m. The following people were in attendance:

Mayor:	Edward L. Arrington
Trustees:	Connie Sternberg
	Jane Woody (arrived at 9:30 – Executive Session)
	Tom Clark
	Ken Smith
	Ann Lockwood
	Jim Legursky
Clerk-Treasurer:	Rod Marchewka
DPW Supt:	Jeff Soules
WWTP Supt.:	Ron Horton
Fire Department Reps:	Scott Gurney
Police Chief:	Rick McCulskey
Absent:	Irene Graven

Insert “A” Visitor’s List

At 7:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Mayor Arrington followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation.

Privilege of the Floor

No one spoke.

Public Hearing on Local Law #5 of 2010 – Solid Waste

Barb Krolczyk – 130 McMaster Street, spoke in favor of the new law.

**Motion by Trustee Sternberg, seconded by Trustee Clark, to accept Local Law #5 with revisions.**

**Discussion:**

- 1) Put information on Web Site
- 2) Publish any changes to the law
- 3) Only thing changing is amount of the fine

**Unanimously  
Approved**

Preserve America Grant information on “Owego Still” a documentary film that will provide audiences with an educational and artistic approach to appreciating structural evidence of Owego’s past.

*Cemetery Request*

Discussion on cemetery regulations DPW Superintendent Jeff Soules to make copies of the Cemetery Rules and Regulations for the Village Board.

Mr. Harold Abrams to be invited to a meeting with the Cemetery Commission and members of the Village Board.

Emma Sedore has resigned as Chairman of the Cemetery Commission. We will need a new chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

Site Plan Review – village attorney is working out details (under review at this time).

**Motion by Trustee Clark, seconded by Trustee Smith, to go into Executive Session for the following topics:**

- 1) Employment history and possible appointment of one employee within the Sewer Department staff;**
- 2) Employment history and possible appointment of one employee within the Clerk’s Office;**
- 3) Employment history and possible appointment of one employee within the Police Department;**
- 4) Employment history and possible appointment of two employees within the DPW staff;**
- 5) Possible suspension of an employee of the Police Department;**
- 6) Pending litigation; and**
- 7) Collective bargaining negotiations.**

**Unanimously  
Approved**

VBM 8-16-2010

**Motion by Trustee Sternberg, seconded by Trustee Clark, to approve the July Treasurer's Report.**

**Discussion:** 1) Franchise Fee's  
2) CDBG – Checking THOMA – work being done on CDGB Grants

**Motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Sternberg, to approve August 2, 2010 minutes with corrections.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

**Motion by Trustee Sternberg, seconded by Trustee Smith, to table June 15, 2010 minutes until Trustee Smith revises motion on not to bond for the cemetery. Trustee Clark voted no. Trustees Sternberg, Legursky, Smith, and Lockwood voted yes.**

**Passed 4-1**

**Motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Clark, to approve the minutes of August 2, 2010.**

**Discussion on trees on Talcott Street.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

- Dean Street Resurfacing

**Motion by Trustee Lockwood, seconded by Trustee Smith, to approve repairs (mill & fill) and resurfacing of Dean Street for approximately \$60,000 budgeted item.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

**Motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Clark, to approve payment of up to \$7,000.00 for the Fire Department to purchase rope, hooks, and rope rescue systems to outfit 21 fire fighters (this purchase will clear up some of the PESH violations). Also, included are self-contained breathing equipment and harness & rope units.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

The mayor asked PESH for an extension of time to have violations taken care of. A one (1) month extension has been approved (posted at all fire stations).

**Department Heads' Reports:**

**WWTP**

Date: 8/13/10

To: Mayor Arrington, Sewer Commissioner and Personnel Committee

VBM 8-16-2010

From: Ron Horton, Supt. WWTP

Re: New hires

Ed,

As you are aware the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Project is requiring the village to reduce the phosphorus levels in our effluent, as well as undertake an upgrade at the treatment plant to address nitrogen reduction. These actions will require additional personnel at the facility to operate not only the treatment plant but maintain our collection system.

In the current FY 10-11 I added an additional 2 employees to my budget in anticipation of the Chesapeake Bay requirements. I feel it is important that we put these employees on as soon as possible so they may be involved with the operation and upgrade of the treatment plant from the beginning of these new requirements. The new employees will also need at least one year of experience working at the plant before they can be sent to achieve their operator's license.

We have begun a full scale pilot project at the treatment plant designed to reduce our phosphorus levels. The early indications are that we will be operating our belt press daily to keep up with the additional production of bio-solids. This is a direct result of precipitating out phosphorus. The additional bio-solids production was anticipated and was one of the reasons I added additional monies to my full time employee line item. The operation of the press will in all practical terms remove one employee from my workforce as they will be dedicated to operating this equipment.

The reduction of phosphorus and upgrades to reduce our nitrogen levels will require greater process control by the operators of the facility. This will require that more time be spent in the laboratory monitoring the various parameters. Currently an average of 3-4 hours a day is spent on required laboratory testing and process controls. Many of the process controls that are currently done once a week will have to be done daily. It is likely that the number of hours spent on process controls and required testing will double.

This will again have a negative impact on our department's ability to properly maintain the plant and collection system.

The village sewer department currently maintains 18.3 miles of sewer mains, over 1300 lateral connections, 8 pump stations and a total of 14 buildings. In addition we also are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the village's wastewater treatment plant. We also land apply an average of 550 tons of bio-solids annually. The department will be using more than half of its available manpower just to meet the additional workload brought on by the initial requirements of the Chesapeake Bay program. It is imperative that we add employees so that the rest of the system can continue to be maintained.

I have placed in my budget 2 new hires at a rate of \$13.00/hr plus benefits. I currently have 4 applicants for these positions. I would like to request that the personnel committee consider setting up interviews with these applicants so we may begin the hiring process.

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Ed Bidwell

The first set of PESH violations have been completed. All but 2 items on the 2<sup>nd</sup> set of PESH Violations have been completed.

Jeff Soules

**Motion by Trustee Lockwood, seconded by Trustee Smith, to approve up to \$9,500 for sidewalk repairs (to fix trip hazards) some 4 feet and some 6 feet. Including 71 Fox Street.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

Discussion on removing some of the garbage cans in Marvin Park because they are being misused – no action taken at this time.

Police Chief

- Discussion on overnight parking
- Trustee Clark – committee currently working on this issue

Trustee Legursky

Mr. Legursky will be teaching a 4H bow hunter class October 2, 2010 at Marvin Park. The mayor thanked Mr. Legursky for his efforts in this endeavor.

Village Clerk

Information item – Owego Servicemen's Memorial Home (VFW) has applied to renew their liquor license with the New York State Liquor Authority.

Discussion:

Single audit report needed for the village because the village received over \$500,000 in calendar year. Recommending the Firm of Ciashi, Dieteshagen, Little, Mickelson & Company (this company has done audits for the Town of Owego).

Village received a refund check of \$4,620.00 from (NYMIR) New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal

Trustee Sternberg

August 16, 2010

A review of the fines levied for accumulation of raw garbage and refuse suggests that repeat offenders with serious issues account for most of the tickets. Since July of 2008 the Court has heard 42 cases. Nearly half of those tickets (18) were issued to seven people.

At this time, there is no set minimum fine for violations to this law. Repeat offenders have been charged as little as \$50 and \$100 was used in only one case. Dismissals or ACDs (adjourned contemplating dismissal) for an extended period of time occur frequently. This results in repeat offenders who tie up the resources of the code officer, attorney and court.

Simply stated, this change sets a minimum fine that would send a stronger message or consequence for accumulation of garbage that often becomes a health hazard. Within the last two months, nearly two tons of garbage and refuse was removed from one property. This change would send a strong message and prevent repeat occurrences before it ever got to this point.

Other:

The code officer has already started inspections of rental properties. The office is making preparations for the letters to go out to all owners of rental properties as the program starts to implement the program.

All three of the properties deemed unsafe that came to the Board's attention were purchased at the County auction. We will await the outcome of those sales and keep the Board informed.

Mayor

New Committees:

- 1) Economic Development
  - a. John Baust – Chairman
  - b. David Allen
  - c. John Shaffer
  - d. Orville Wright
- 2) Grants & Finance
  - a. Lynne Mieczkowski – Chairman
  - b. Leonard Mantei
  - c. Grace Thomas
  - d. Russell Fuller
- 3) REAP (Rural Economic Area Partnership)
  - a. Melody Patterson – Chairman

Thank you to Trustee Tom Clark for sitting in on the Fire Board Meeting.

Thanked the Board for approving the fire department purchases of 21 sets of rope rescue systems to comply with PESH.

Trustee Lockwood

VBM 8-16-2010

Thanked Mr. Mark Smarr and Fire Chief Ed Bidwell for all the information at the informal meeting on the fire department issues.

Privilege of the Floor

Lee Dunham, 330 Main Street, wanted to know if his sidewalk could be lifted instead of having to put in a new piece. Jeff Soules will try to lift up and repair first.

How about signs that say that Marvin Park is a “carry in” “carry out” park?

Rich Watkins, Ross Street, thanked Trustee Smith for working on the Cemetery issues. Mr. Watkins supports the proposal from Mr. Abrams.

Mayor Arrington – the cemetery needs to expand or look at closing.

James Striley, 27 Adeline Street, can agenda be posted on the Village web site before meetings? Clerk responded that we should have that capability shortly.

Erdine Toft, 18 Woodlawn Avenue, what happens if sewer bills are not paid? Clerk stated that any unpaid sewer is added to the next village tax bill.

Adjourned to Executive Session 8:45.

Trustee Woody arrived and attended the Executive Session.

**Motion by Trustee Clark, seconded by Trustee Lockwood to adjourn the Executive Session.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

**Motion by Trustee Legursky, seconded by Trustee Lockwood, to go back into regular session.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

**Motion by Trustee Woody, seconded by Trustee Legursky, that the Sewer Department be authorized to start the hiring process for two new employees.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**

**Motion by Trustee Legursky, seconded by Trustee Woody, to adjourn at 9:20 p.m.**

**Unanimously**

**Approved**